

POSTHUMOUS WORKS  
AND  
Unpublished Autographs  
OF  
NAPOLEON III. IN EXILE.



*COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY*  
COUNT DE LA CHAPELLE,  
COADJUTOR IN THE LAST WORKS OF THE EMPEROR AT CHISLEHURST.

London :  
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, LOW, & SEARLE,  
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1873.

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## PREFACE.

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WITHOUT any other adviser but my own conscience, and anxious only to fulfil a duty, I have published the principal works of the Emperor in exile ; my chief aim has been to demonstrate by authentic proofs that the calumniators of Napoleon III. have arbitrarily distorted the truth in everything, and as to everything ; and that the Emperor would only have had to speak out to repulse victoriously the attacks of which he was the object.

In arranging various documents which were confided to me by the Emperor, with the commission to publish them some day, I have been obliged to select those which were destined for immediate publication ; but in examining each fresh work, I have had to ask myself, Would the Emperor have thought this the opportune moment for making it public ? In every case where this question has been answered in the negative, or where there has been any doubt on the subject, I have abstained from putting it forward.

I have observed the same rule with regard to several important conversations and a number of notes and opinions the secret of which is not my property ;

these will not be allowed to see the light unless it should become necessary to point out the guilty parties, and to prove the duplicity of which the Emperor was the victim.

This work, therefore, does not contain any of these revelations, although it includes facts of importance for the history of France, and also manuscripts of great value, as emanating directly from the Emperor.

I have divided my collection into two parts. In the first, I give a political pamphlet and annotations on certain events in the last war; in the second, I give entire the Emperor's unpublished work on the military position of France, and the plan, hitherto unknown, of the Campaign of 1870.

Fifty-five letters or annotations in the Emperor's handwriting, carefully copied in fac-simile from the originals in my possession, are inserted in this work as corroborative proofs of the authenticity of the manuscripts placed in my hands by His Majesty.

Lastly, I have sketched in a few lines some of the principal incidents in the life at Chislehurst of the illustrious Sovereign whose aspirations and actions, whether in exile or on the throne, ever had as their motive the happiness and greatness of France.

COUNT ALFRED DE LA CHAPELLE.

LONDON, *April*, 1873.

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Or. ult. h. 12 J. 1471

Mme de Mevius de Boiche  
L'un des plus beaux  
fais de la comarçonne de Me  
de la Chapelle St. Martin  
distingue par sa noblesse et  
sa noblesse de la comarçonne  
de 1471 et 1472 de la comarçonne  
de la comarçonne de la comarçonne  
de la comarçonne de la comarçonne

Or. h. 12 J. 1471  
afirmation de la comarçonne  
de la comarçonne de la comarçonne

Or. h. 12 J. 1471

POSTHUMOUS WORKS

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NAPOLEON III. IN EXILE.

**XL.N.38**

THE RECEPTION.

EVERY one has been writing, for my part, I have preferred to wait in meditation until my grief had calmed down and my mind, reinvigorated by the precious reminiscences of two years of intimacy, allowed me to retrace calmly the incidents which marked the last days of the illustrious exile.

After an absence of eighteen years from my country, I was summoned, by a conjuncture of circumstances which it would be needless to explain here, to be an eye-witness of the great drama which changed so suddenly the destinies of France. I followed its events step by step. I was present at our principal disasters, and, despite the well-warranted despair which I felt in seeing the reverses of my country, I was, one of the few men who, in the supreme hour of misfortune, dared openly to take the side of the Emperor Napoleon III.

Unknown and a stranger to all favours, that my motive I had to guide my pen was a sense of justice and independence acquired by protracted travel and association with free peoples.

It was, therefore, almost unwittingly myself, and



urged only by my conscience, that, in the hour of trial, I—I who have never aspired to any honour whatever—became a courtier of misfortune.

My recompense has been a rich one, and my devotion has been a thousand-fold overpaid by the immense honour of having been the friend in exile of the greatest prince of modern times.

Metz, Sedan, and Wilhelmshöhe had witnessed the unrolling of the sad panorama, at the last scene of which the sovereign had now arrived: exile had taken the place of a prison. At Chislehurst I was going to meet again him I had lost sight of at Sedan, when he was hidden from my view amid grape-shot and shell.

On the 28th. of March, 1871, I proceeded to Camden Place, and waited upon the Emperor Napoleon III., who had arrived in England six days before. I was received by him at noon.

The Emperor and Empress were alone in a small drawing-room; they received me warmly and invited me to be seated, the Emperor himself pointing out to me a seat on which I should be more comfortable than on the one I had chosen.

The Emperor was much altered in a physical point of view, and appeared aged by ten years. Moral suffering and the griefs which he had experienced were reflected in his countenance, ordinarily so impassive. Nevertheless, the efforts he made to subdue them and his habitual calmness would have been sufficient to impose on any ordinary observer.

"I have to compliment you," said his Majesty to me, "on the book that you have written on the war. I have been struck by its impartiality, and it is very interesting; but it contains a few errors which I am anxious to point out to you."

Having indicated several points on which the information I had received was deficient in accuracy, we entered

upon the most important event of all—the catastrophe of Sedan.

“You appear not to be aware,” said his Majesty, “that the nomination of General de Wimpffen was made without my knowledge, and by orders emanating directly from General de Palikao, Minister of War. No one was more astonished than myself at learning that Wimpffen, who had arrived at head-quarters twenty-four hours before, had, just at the very moment when Marshal Mac-Mahon had been severely wounded, produced the positive orders of the Minister ordering him to assume the chief command in case the Duke of Magenta should be taken prisoner or wounded. I found myself powerless to direct events, and during the battle the generals came to me, one after another, to announce that there was no other alternative but capitulation. Wimpffen, Lebrun, Ducrot, and others, declared that it was the only course to be taken, and that they were going to act in pursuance of this view. For my part, I resolved to sacrifice myself in the endeavour to save the army and France.”

“But the greatest misfortune, sire,” I replied to the Emperor, “appears to me to be the fact that you were deprived of the command and were placed in a situation in which, whilst assuming the moral responsibility, you renounced all authority.”

The Emperor did not answer this remark: he slightly shook his head, and left the Empress to resume the conversation. She said,—

“The Emperor was, in fact, plunged into the unhappy position of taking a part in events without having had the least influence in directing their course. You will, however, see this; for his Majesty has annotated your book for you with his own hand.”

In fact, in a few days afterwards, I received the volume which I reproduce farther on, a volume which has become

precious on account of the various remarks written in the margin in the Emperor's handwriting.

The Empress interrogated me for a long time as to the armies of the national defence, and showing a patriotism superior to all political prejudice, she found indulgent expressions for those who had betrayed and abandoned her, and declared clearly that she would have forgotten everything and would have forgiven her enemies, if only they could have saved France.

These first explanations were followed by a long conversation about my travels and adventures in America and Australia, and by multifarious details as to these distant countries. I spoke of the English press, of our mode of procedure in following armies in quest of news, and ultimately took leave of the Emperor and Empress, thanking them for their kindness to me, and assuring them of my devotion in the land of exile.

From week to week I renewed my visits, and becoming more and more fascinated by the wonderful attraction which drew men to Napoleon III., I followed the current, and soon found myself under the influence of this vast genius. My admiration now knew no bounds, and I asked to be allowed to serve the dethroned monarch. My offer was accepted, and I became passionately devoted to his cause.

The injustice of my fellow-countrymen towards one who had done so much for them, sympathy for great misfortunes, and the hope of being useful to my country, were the motives which led me to act thus.

I became sincerely attached to the Emperor, and he doubtless understood this, for he soon raised me to the distinction of an intimacy which increased down to the last days of his life. It is upon this score that I have lately reproduced a few incidents of the life in exile of this great monarch, and those of his works in which I have assisted, which also were intended by him for publicity.

## THE EMPEROR AND THE PAMPHLET ON PRINCIPLES.

NAPOLEON III. was certainly one of the most remarkable men who have ever lived. All his actions prove this, and it will not be long ere his life, which henceforth belongs to impartial history, will be developed in all its truth, and will give birth to an estimation of him which has escaped those who were nearest to, and most intimate with, him.

He was a great philosopher and a great thinker, who liked to meditate in silence on the ideas which gushed forth from his powerful brain, so as to cause them to see the light when he thought that the proper hour was come; but, until that time arrived, he wrapped himself in a cloak of taciturnity, and at the least questioning retired within himself.

He was acquainted with and knew everything; and nevertheless, he listened patiently to the most absurd theories and the most random reasoning; then, suddenly, in three or four words he proved to his interlocutor the falseness of his arguments, and pointed out the error; but his manner was so courteous, and the tone of his voice was so full of kindness, that the authority of the master disappeared in his extreme kindliness.

Although very reserved with people with whom he was not acquainted, the Emperor readily gave himself up to intimacy, and in his frankness did not hide his impressions; if he was attached to any one he gave him his advice, and put him on his guard against the rocks on which he might be shipwrecked.

He was extremely good-natured and generous to excess, and never forgot those who had once loved him;

he adored his son and tenderly loved the Empress, and when either of their pleasing faces made its appearance in his study, the countenance of the father or the husband was lighted up with an ineffable smile of tenderness and affection.

I can never forget the kindly welcome with which he greeted me every time I visited him, and the numerous thanks that he heaped upon me for small and unimportant services ; I shall never forget the readiness with which he excused and forgave errors. Nevertheless he was firm, and any serious violation of honour or of certain principles would have found him inexorable.

The Emperor had habituated me to speak freely to him, and in my almost daily intercourse with him, I touched upon all subjects ; when I sometimes lost my way in the higher spheres of politics, I obtained from the sovereign precise ideas and explanations of high value.

Generally speaking, I was received by the Emperor at nine o'clock in the morning, in a study adjoining his bed-chamber.

This room was so small that two or three visitors would have been quite sufficient to fill it ; it was lighted by a high French window, looking out on to the meadows of Camden Place, and on the charming landscape bounded by the park.

A small library, a whole panoply of fire-arms, two chairs, an arm-chair, and a writing-table of white wood, composed the very unpretending furniture of this room.

A miniature portrait of the Empress, another of the Prince Imperial, and a small travelling-clock, were the only ornaments placed on the writing-table, where various papers, the work of each day, were arranged in proper order.

My visits were generally brief, even when I had to work ; but in the short time I passed with the Emperor,



my mind was stored with notes and admirable documents, which I only had to develop.

"Here," he said to me one day, "write a pamphlet on the abandonment of principles, the chief source of all the misfortunes which are afflicting Europe; for principles are the bond which maintains communities in their normal state, and keeps governments in the right path. You have here some notes on this subject."

A few days afterwards I brought out a short essay ("Les Principes, par un ancien Diplomate"); it was shortly after the events of the Commune, and the work became but little known. It is true enough that people were very far from suspecting that this work emanated from Napoleon III.

I made but very little alteration in the manuscript which the Emperor put into my hands, and the ideas and the thoughts which the pamphlet contained are written by his Majesty's own hand.

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## PRINCIPLES.

BY A LATE DIPLOMATIST.

*(Manuscript of the Emperor.)*

FRANCE and other portions of Europe are a prey to a malady, the original source of which consists in the abandonment of principles.

For some years past it has been said that treaties, solemnly signed, do not bind the various powers except in their mutual relations; law, justice, and even decency are put on one side. In every country individuals show the same cynicism in their mutual relations. Party

spirit has destroyed morality, and the Revolution has annihilated law. Good and evil are no longer judged by the conscience, but by political interests.

Thus, what do we now see? Atheism in religion, want of faith in politics, and scepticism in morality. To whom are we to attribute the fault? In the first place to the government, and in the second place to the cowardice of the citizens.

When, in 1792, France overthrew Louis XVI., the sovereigns of Europe justly maintained the principles of legitimacy, and did not recognize the right of the French people to dethrone their king.

For twelve years they struggled to defend the cause of the Bourbons, which was, in fact, their own cause; and when at last vanquished by the force of arms and the resistance of the French people, they were compelled (England excepted) to recognize the new dynasty of Napoleon I., they understood that this recognition, coming after so many fruitless efforts and so many extraordinary events, could not be considered the abandonment of a principle, but the sanction given to one of those great historical facts which appear at intervals of many centuries, such as the accession of the Carolingian line taking the place of the Merovingian dynasty, or the Capets taking the place of the latter, or the substitution of the House of Hanover for that of Stuart.

An exception based on events so extraordinary as those which distinguish the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, could neither form a rule nor establish a dangerous precedent. Thus, when the dynasty of Napoleon was once recognized and for ten years admitted into the family of sovereigns, it was necessary to maintain it; for by overthrowing it in 1814 and 1815, not only was the era of revolutions reopened, but the royal character was degraded instead of being elevated. It was equivalent to telling the people

that royalty was a function just like any other, of which a sovereign might be deprived without any special regard, and that the man before whom people had bowed down for so long, the man who had been consecrated by the Lord, could be dismissed like a simple mortal.

When Europe in coalition dethroned Napoleon I., she then prepared fresh dangers for the future, and dealt a fatal blow to recognized rights; thus the punishment was not long delayed, and 1830 overthrew the edifice which the sovereigns had founded in 1815.

Moved by the example which was before their eyes, these very same sovereigns suddenly changed their line of conduct, and all of them, except the Emperor Nicholas, made up their minds to recognize for the future every *de facto* government, whatever might be its right, its origin, or its morality.

We do not maintain that, in order to uphold the principle of authority, Europe was bound to again make war against France in order to force her to preserve legitimacy; but she ought to have shown more decency, and instead of throwing herself into the arms of a government sprung from an insurrection, a government which had not even the right of popular election in its favour, she should have waited before recognizing Louis Philippe's government, until the latter, having had a certain duration, might be considered as having received the tacit acquiescence of the French people. For if the principle of revolution be admitted, logic requires that the new government should receive its authority from the people themselves, who alone possess the qualification for conferring legally the rights of supreme authority. Outside these rights, government can only be usurpation.

But it is especially after the 4th of September that the Courts of Europe showed weakness and a revolting cynicism; not only did they lay aside their principles, but they forgot their duties towards civilization, and

brought about the excesses of that demagoguery which tends to spread over all the countries of the world.

By allowing the rights of a faithful ally to be trodden under foot, by sacrificing treaties gained at the cost of the best of her blood, England, the very country which was the soul of the European coalition for the sake of a principle, has systematically omitted to avail herself of opportunities of recovering her influence, and of maintaining the right. Nevertheless, the other great powers followed this policy of dangerous egotism, so full of dangers for the future. On the 4th of September there was in France a government which had sprung, not from an insurrection, but from the free will of the people; at four solemn conjunctures the French people had expressed this supreme will; all the powers of Europe had not only recognized this government, but had also shown that they were glad to preserve the intimate relations they had kept up with it.

Three years had scarcely elapsed since nearly all the sovereigns had come to Paris to salute the chief of the nation. This was a magnificent festival, and a solemn homage paid to the power of the heir of Napoleon I., a consecration of the rights of his dynasty; and when a handful of factionists, emboldened by the treason of the principal military commanders, overthrew this government, which was much more engrossed in the defence of the country than in the preservation of its own existence, a spectacle was witnessed both extraordinary and painful.

All the powers of Europe might be seen maintaining in Paris the same ambassadors and the same ministers, and lavishing on the insurgents day after day the same protestations of friendship which the night before they had given to the legitimate government.

They thus gave a moral sanction to the illegal acts of party chiefs who had attained power by undue means,

and in consequence of the defection of General Trochu and a minority of the Chamber.

They looked on with indifference at the disorganization of the French administration, and at that subversive propaganda which must necessarily bring about civil war with all its barbarism, and the destruction of the monuments of the capital of the arts and civilization.

We saw the English cabinet, repudiating all the reminiscences of an intimate alliance, ordering its representative not to accompany the Empress-Regent, if she removed the seat of government out of Paris; and yet this very cabinet, a few weeks afterwards, enjoined on its ambassador to follow servilely to Tours, M.M. Gambetta, Cremieux, and their party.

How can we expect that simple citizens should maintain intact the sacredness of duty whilst the powers of Europe are treading it under foot, and are treating in the same way, by employing the same expressions and the same agents, the legitimate representatives of an uncontested power and the extemporized representatives of street-insurrections?

Sovereigns, by showing that everything is justified by success, have taught the people to accept the relaxing principles. On September the 4th the deputies who had sworn allegiance to Napoleon III. took possession of the Hôtel-de-Ville, and, in the face of the advancing enemy, overthrew all the existing authorities; they nominated themselves members of the government

“ In case her Imperial Majesty should make her mind Paris, with a view of maintaining the Imperial government with a of power, you will not, under any circumstances, accompany her Majesty; but you will do all that lies in your power to contribute her safety and her comfort—that is, you are appealed to give your advice or your support.

(Signed) GRANVILLE.”

(Despatch of Lord Granville to Lord Lyons Paris, September 5th, 1870.—*Blue Book*, No. 71.)



that they improvised ; the General, who had been appointed by the Emperor as governor of Paris, became President of the Government of National Defence ; and the country followed the example of the foreign governments ; it did not require an account from these usurpers by what right they were going to command the nation. The people submitted and obeyed, and all control was dispensed with. There was no longer a freely-elected Assembly, Council of State, Audit Office, or General Councils. The treasures of the country were squandered, and blood was shed in mere waste. The organization of armies by contract was given to extemporized generals. " Here are so many millions," it was said to them ; " raise, clothe, and equip an army just as you can." The State was without any guarantee, so the armies remained without pay, without food, and without arms. All the men of bad character were placed in the army or in public functions.

The murderers of the *pompier*s of La Villette, who had been condemned to death, were set at liberty and placed in the National Guard. Mégy, also a murderer, was released from the convict-prison at Toulon, and received the command of a battalion. Persons who had suffered judicial punishment, to the number of 20,000, were enrolled in the National Guard. All the officers who had been dismissed from their corps were replaced in the ranks of the army. Thus it is that a country is taught that ■ revolution relieves from every infamy, and that, provided an individual calls himself a republican, although he may have been a thief, a murderer, or a traitor, he is looked upon as an honest man.

The magnificent resources which France has at its disposal were squandered by the ambitious and the incapable ; decrees incessantly multiplied and senseless plans were flashed along the telegraphic lines ; the panting nation was plunged into the most fatal illusions,

and our brave volunteers found themselves without arms and without equipments face to face with the hostile volleys which were decimating their ranks.

The tribunes speculated shamelessly on the patriotism of France. They did not shrink from recalling the great epochs of our military glories, and claimed to personify the heroes of other days ; but all their actions bore the stamp of egotism and of personal prepossessions, and their vulgar minds lost themselves under the influence of greatness.

What can be a more flagrant proof of the relaxation of political morality than the indifference shown in respect to General Trochu's treason? Here we have a military man who has sworn allegiance to the Emperor, and receives from him at a supreme moment the highest mark of confidence: he is nominated chief commandant of all the forces collected in the capital, and is bound to watch over the safety of the Empress ; and yet this man, who, on the morning of the 4th of September, promised the Regent that any enemy should pass over his body before he reached her, allows the Corps Législatif and the Tuileries to be invaded, and, after the lapse of hardly a few hours since his solemn protestations, usurps the power and declares himself President of the Government of National Defence.

A blacker, more flagrant, and more unpardonable act of treason has never been perpetrated, for it was committed towards a woman, and in the face of the foreign invasion ; and yet this man, who must be called a traitor, for that is the name due to him, appears in spite of all this to enjoy general esteem. In several departments he is nominated to the National Assembly by ignorant electors. No one blushes to shake hands with him, and he is appointed president of commissions which are to decide on points of honour.

Do not these facts show evidently that we have lost

all moral sense? What a contrast with the events which took place in the sixteenth century!

When the Constable of Bourbon, who had betrayed Francis I., proceeded to Spain, Charles V. compelled one of the lords of his court, the Marquis de Villena, to entertain the Constable. The marquis obeyed, but when his guest had left he burnt down his own palace, declaring that he would not maintain a house that had given shelter to a traitor. We very much doubt whether the owner of the house which General Trochu inhabits will follow this chivalrous example.

The extinction of the moral sense is due to the men of the 4th of September. By assuming the power which they snatched in one of those moments of emergency when the interests of the country ought to have held the French more closely united in the face of the invader, and when we had most need for preserving the established government and the machinery of administration, they raised for their own profit the standard of revolt and prepared a series of disasters unparalleled in the history of France.

Thus also, by assuming the deceptive title of the "Government of National Defence," they stirred up the mind of the nation, lulling to sleep its instincts of right, and deceiving its good faith. Its programme was a brilliant one. It drew its inspiration from the glorious recollections of the Convention, the Consulate, and the Empire. Glory, so dear to the country, was mirrored on the horizon, and the whole of France forgot her duties towards her sovereign in order to submit to usurpers who promised her that they would drive out the foreigner and would avenge the earlier defeats in the blood of the invader.

But this fatal oligarchy was not ignorant of its own impotence. It squandered the treasures of France and shed blood in profusion, with no other aim than that of

Camden Place,  
Chislehurst.

L'Empereur a l'honneur d'envoyer  
historique, comme à Versailles,  
par exemple les armes et les  
emblèmes de la maison de Bourbon.  
Les plans publiés par le  
historien De Lamoignon et par  
le marquis de Lamoignon.  
Les manuscrits sont remplacés  
le régime pendant le régime  
et les changements.

Plusieurs et surtout en fait.  
suspension en fait dans la note  
et dans la note pour  
l'Empereur. L'Empereur a  
remplacé par un régime  
en fait. Il était par  
de lui donner un nouveau nom.  
Cher à l'Empereur a voulu  
que le nouveau soit consacré  
le nom de Louis Louis Philippe.  
L.

satisfying presumptuous ambition and of clinging to power on the ruins of France.

Its defeats, both in war and in policy, did not fail to immerse the nation in a state of torpor and indifference which must have caused it to bear everything; for, after having filled it with illusions, and held out to it a future of glory and prosperity, the tribunes were able with impunity to diminish it, to tarnish its honour, and to make it undergo every kind of distress.

Scepticism both in religion and politics had gained ground; and oppressed by the weight of the woes of the country and private misfortunes, the people became disordered, demoralized, and ready to put in practice the theories which had been advanced with the sole aim of overthrowing the established government. From this state of things to the excesses of the Commune there was but one step, which inevitably had to be taken.

In small as well as in great things the men of the 4th of September have shown themselves ignorant of every true principle. An instance of this may be seen in the fact of their having altered the name of a street from "*Dix Décembre*" to "*Quatre Septembre*." For the former designation recalls to mind the regular and legitimate exercise of universal suffrage, the election of Louis Napoleon to the Presidency of the Republic in spite of the opposition of the then government, having been the most unfettered act of the national sovereignty, whilst "*Quatre Septembre*" recalls the most flagrant violation of legality and justice.

It was often proposed to Napoleon III. to call to mind by some monument the remembrance of the 2nd of December; but, although the *coup d'état* had been legalized by nearly eight millions of votes, the Emperor always refused to celebrate an action which, although necessary in his opinion, was none the less a violation of



the law. The republicans have not been so scrupulous. Thus all that is going on at the present time is defective at the very foundation. There is no longer any distinction drawn between that which is good and that which is evil. In vain are attempts made to seek on which side the right lies; and those who are defending society are just as guilty as those who are attacking it.

After the Revolution of the 4th of September the duty of every conscientious man was traced out for him by the precedents of our former political troubles. Since the Constitution of 1793 all the changes brought about by popular movement have been legitimized by a verdict of the nation; but the government of the 4th of September has considered itself empowered to emancipate itself from this obligation.

The leaders of the *émeute* inaugurated their advent to power by substituting arbitrary actions for all the principles of legality, by exciting all the hatred and passions of the populace against the government which they had just overthrown, by distorting the truth of facts, and by making the misfortunes and reverses which had so rapidly stricken the country turn to the attainment of their personal ambition.

To drive out the invader was the watch-word with which they deceived the people, and the pretext for committing every kind of excess, whilst really the first thing that the new members of the government thought of, tended solely towards the realization of their own projects.

While the armies of the King of Prussia were marching on Paris, and poor doting France was writhing under the grasp of the conqueror, the republican chiefs were organizing a puerile inquiry to censure the actions in private life of the members of the Emperor's government; they seemed to be much more anxious to make changes in high civil offices and in the magistrature, and to surround

themselves exclusively with their own accomplices and partisans, whether they possessed the requisite qualities or not, than to think of some means of delivering the country from the German invasion.

Enormities were perpetrated. Is it not now a matter of notoriety, that the then Minister of Foreign Affairs suppressed documents which proved that the Empire had a prospect of alliances, and that the integrity of the French nation would be protected by several of the great powers? But the chief leader of the government of the *émeute* did not recoil before a crime hitherto unknown: he sacrificed the nation for the sake of the republican minority.

Events succeeded one another with a rapidity that turned one giddy. The population had lost all its energy and all its power of initiative; the dictators had decreed that there should be victory, and promised to purge our provinces from the presence of the foreigner.

This was also the pretext of the National Defence, which was put forward in order to avoid an appeal to the nation, and the men of the 4th of September preferred rather to maintain their position unlawfully than to face the vote of the electors.

Thus France became more and more isolated, and the enemy took advantage of the anarchy which prevailed to continue at war with a country which had no regular government, with which it could not negotiate, which also raised the flag of demagogy. Prussia influenced European diplomacy, which held itself aloof, and this was all that could have been expected; in fact, how was it possible that the various sovereigns should come to the assistance of a government, the programme of which was the overthrow of all monarchies?

We will not here recall the numerous instances of incapacity and personal ambition which were so fatal to us, and the promises of victory, so many times repeated,

which have just ended in such shameful disasters. We were compelled to make peace, and, consequently, to convene a National Assembly.

This Assembly was elected under exceptional circumstances, and although M. Thiers has asserted that no election had ever been as unbiassed as this one, all those who were close observers of what took place in the departments, know how much of this statement is to be relied upon.

Intimidation has never been exercised less scrupulously, and M. Gambetta's decree, which excluded as ineligible all the former officials and deputies of the Empire, took full effect, as it was repealed only at the last moment. Those who were eligible had not time to come forward, and the greater part of the electors were in ignorance of the repeal of this decree of ostracism.

It is evident to every one that the Assembly, having been appointed with the express mission of making peace, had no other mandate to fulfil; and when M. Thiers declared it to be sovereign, he committed an usurpation.

The Assembly, nominated at the last moment of emergency, received but one mandate, that of putting a stop to useless bloodshed. This duty being accomplished it was bound to resign, for it had no right to substitute its will for that of the people. Thus, when in a moment of surprise, without daring to put it to the vote, it declared the deposition of Napoleon III., it committed a fresh usurpation: its decision was an act which was null and void.

What can be said of those Ministers, Deputies, and Generals of the Empire, who were present at that sitting and did not protest?

The disasters which our armies underwent during the concluding campaigns were immense; but our moral

defeats were even greater than our material overthrow. Not only have we lost battles, strongholds, and provinces, but we have also forfeited the prestige and esteem which we had enjoyed in Europe.

To a nation, as to an individual, misfortune is not degrading when it is bravely endured. Now, we in our calamities have not displayed any of those chivalrous virtues which elevate the character, and draw down upon the conquered both respect and consideration. Although the armies fought valiantly, nowhere was there to be seen either respect to their oath, fidelity to an unhappy sovereign, observance of discipline, or unity among those who were suffering the same fate.

The disturbance which existed in society was naturally reproduced in the army; and when union has once been broken, nothing is left but anarchy, personal ambition, and forgetfulness of every duty.

Neither the Prussians after Jena, the Russians after Moscow, the Italians after Novara, nor the Austrians after Königsgrätz, presented such a lamentable spectacle as we exhibited to the world.

It is with regret that we recall all these facts, but it is requisite that the truth should be made known; and the only means of restoring moral and material order in our unfortunate country is by loudly proclaiming those great principles of morality, law, and justice, without which society would not be able to exist.

Order cannot be re-established unless power is based on right. Now, right in our country lies in the whole body of citizens; it is, therefore, requisite that the form of government should be decided by a loyal appeal made to the whole nation.

Morality and justice will never be re-established until every one is treated according to their works, and, independently of party spirit, that which is wrong is called

wrong, that which is treason is called treason, that which is contrary to law is called usurpation, and that which is prejudicial to the principles of legality, morality, and humanity, is called injustice.

The above is an epitome of this pamphlet, the first work of the Emperor in which I had the honour of affording my assistance.



## THE WAR OF 1870.

BY COUNT DE LA CHAPELLE.

(*A Work annotated by the Emperor.*)

UPON my return from a campaign of three months as military correspondent of *The Standard* with the French armies, I collected a few of my letters to that journal, and adding thereto some notes which I had hurriedly taken on the battle-fields, I published a preliminary work under the title of "The War of 1870."

This was in the month of November. The official reports had not as yet been published, the war was being inveterately carried on, and in the midst of events following one upon another with prodigious rapidity, it was almost impossible to state correctly a great many details and facts of importance.

It was only among the most stirring changes and chances of the contest, that the various incidents and great acts of the drama were brought to my view, and although my estimation of them was influenced neither by private interest nor by personal sympathy, I was deceived on several points which I was afterwards glad to rectify.

The Emperor kindly consented to enlighten me as to many facts, of which it was impossible for me to give an account in the midst of battles; he was good enough to annotate my work with his own hand, and these precious notes, carefully autographed, are those which I reproduce verbatim, just as they are on the margin of the book which was given me by his Majesty.

## CHAPTER I.

ARRIVAL OF THE EMPEROR AT METZ—THE ARMY OF THE RHINE—  
FIRST APPEARANCE OF UHLANS—ENGAGEMENT AT SAARBRUCK—  
ANECDOTES.

ON the 28th of July, the Emperor and the Prince Imperial, accompanied by Prince Napoleon, arrived at Metz. From the railway-station to the Prefecture the streets were swarming with a noisy crowd, impatiently awaiting the arrival of the sovereign.

The *gendarmes*, the *cent-gardes* with their brilliant uniforms, and the zouaves in their Oriental garb, formed the line, and kept back the crowd from the Prefecture to the Porte Serpenoise and the railway-station.

The regiments, belonging to the different army-corps were encamp'd between the railway-station and the fortifications; the tents, the soldiers' uniforms, the equipages of the commissariat, and the villagers in their holiday clothes, added some very picturesque details to the view, which was altogether a most animated scene.

A movement of the crowd and an agitation among the masses of people, soon announced that the Emperor had just arrived, and that his Majesty was about to make his entry into the town in which he intended for the present to establish the head-quarters of the great Army of the Rhine.

The people uncovered their heads, uttering enthusiastic cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" A dozen *cent-gardes*, resplendent in their sky-blue uniforms with

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scarlet facings, headed the procession at a walking pace on their superb horses. Following them came outriders in the Imperial livery, and an equerry of the Emperor's household; then, in an open carriage, driven *à la Daumont*, was seated Napoleon III.

His Imperial Majesty wore the uniform of a General of Division, with the grand cordon of the Legion of Honour; his aide-de-camp, General Waubert de Genlis, and two other Generals formed his suite. A smile of satisfaction lit up the Emperor's countenance, generally so impassive.

Aides-de-camp:  
Prince de la Moskowa, Generals Castelnau, Waubert, Reille, Pajol, Beville, Favé.

A second carriage, open like the first, came next; it contained the Prince Imperial, his aide-de-camp, and his equerry. The young Prince seemed full of enthusiasm, and bowed graciously in response to the acclamations of the crowd.

Prince Napoleon and many high dignitaries of the Empire closed the *cortège*, which proceeded towards the Hotel of the Prefecture, where apartments had been prepared.

An extraordinary animation prevailed in Metz during the days which followed this triumphal entry. The streets were crowded with military in the most varied uniforms, and belonging to all branches of the service. The hotels were overflowing with all sorts of guests—officers, citizens, soldiers, officials, journalists, speculators, and many persons of the very highest rank.

The Hôtel de l'Europe and the Hôtel de Metz had the exclusive honour of giving shelter to the general staff of the army of the Rhine, the Emperor's aides-de-camp, the general intendance, and the chief representatives of the British press, who were remarkable for their assiduity in keeping pace with all the events which occurred in the town.

The head-quarters of the Army of the Rhine was established at Metz. The Emperor's proclamation had just

been published. The different army-corps were composed as follows :—

38,000. First army-corps : Marshal MacMahon, 33,000 men, with a powerful artillery, on the borders of Bas-Rhin, facing Rhenish Bavaria.

Second army-corps : General Frossard, 30,000 strong, at Saint-Avold and Forbach.

Third army-corps : Marshal Bazaine, 32,000 strong, between Courcèlles and Boulay.

Fourth army-corps : General Ladmirault, 29,000 strong, at Boulay.

Fifth army-corps : General de Failly, 26,000 strong, at Saarguemines.

Sixth army-corps : Marshal Canrobert, 28,000 strong, at the camp at Châlons.

Seventh army-corps : General Felix Douay, 30,000 strong, at Belfort.

20,000. The corps of the imperial guard, 30,000 strong, and commanded by General Bourbaki, was encamped at the polygon of Metz (Ile Chambrière).

This grand army, as it was emphatically styled at Metz, was 241,000 men strong, well equipped, and well armed. The excessive zeal and healthy condition of the troops, the magnitude of the preparations, the importance of the stores and artillery which had arrived from all parts of France in so short a time, the excessive confidence of the commanders-in-chief and their officers, evidently gave to all those who were eye-witnesses of this scene a certainty that they were about to be present at the most gigantic contest ever known in modern history.

The Emperor, in his capacity of commander-in-chief, appointed Marshal Leboeuf major-general (chief of the staff) of the army. The ex-minister of war was the right man for the place : he was extremely popular in consequence of some measures of reform which he had



effected after his accession to office, and nobody doubted his capability.

General Soleille was commander-in-chief of the artillery, and General de Saint-Sauveur provost-general of the army. Both were sufficiently well known and respected by the troops.

The general staff was composed of those distinguished officers who had been always renowned for their great skill, their special attainments, and their military science.

Among these may be observed the names of Colonels Lewal, Fay, de Kleinenberg, de Lespée, and many other distinguished officers. Unfortunately these officers were left in secondary positions, without the power of taking the initiative, although they were, with few exceptions, the only ones who had earnestly studied strategy and tactics, and had acquired from experience the practical military science which they had studied theoretically all their lives. But the military hierarchy of France did not permit an officer of merit to direct his superior in rank; and the French staff, composed of distinguished pupils of the École Polytechnique, was compelled, at the commencement of the campaign, to execute, without being able to add any necessary modifications, the absurd plans of a major-general devoid of special attainments, or those of a strategist with a genius more inventive than practical.

We shall soon see in what disasters unhappy France was involved, in consequence of the incapacity of a general who, as minister of war and chief of the staff, had left his sovereign in the most complete ignorance as to the real state of things.

The enthusiasm of the French people was at its height, war had never been so popular, and the chief of the State could not, without endangering his crown, have checked the warlike enthusiasm of the nation. The unbounded confidence, acknowledged to be so fatal when

reverses afterwards came, was so excessive and exaggerated, that an impartial observer could not help trembling when thinking of the consequences which would follow on any deception.

The superior manœuvring, the attacks at the point of the bayonet, and the irresistible dash, all peculiar to the French soldiers, also the mitrailleuses, the marvels of which were so highly extolled, all these were arguments which were conclusive not only among the people and the troops, but also among the officers. Every one expected a prompt and decisive success against the Prussian armies, which, alas! were not estimated at their true value. It was even painful to hear with what disdain intelligent officers spoke of the forces and organization of the enemy.

The opinion of the French was, however, shared by foreign nations; and in England it was generally thought that the chances of war would be in favour of France, although people better informed were of opinion that the attack and dash of the French columns would be checked by the imposing masses and well-disciplined forces of the Germans.

In Lorraine and Alsace, from Nancy to Metz, at Strasbourg and all along the Haguenau line, at Niederbronn and at Saarguemines, the Emperor each day inspected the camps, and was received everywhere with boundless enthusiasm. The shouts of "Vive l'Empereur!" mingled with the national songs of the "Marseillaise" and "Partant pour la Syrie." In the manufacturing towns the workmen and workwomen deserted the workshops in order to hail with acclamations the imperial train and the trains of soldiers; children and young women crowded round the carriages, carrying in their arms baskets laden with provisions, wines, fruits, and flowers, which they generously distributed to the future heroes.

All along the frontier shots were daily exchanged

between the French outposts and the patrols of the enemy, several houses were converted into hospitals in anticipation of contingencies, and a great number of railway-carriages, loaded with provisions, were brought every day at full speed to the front.

During this time the Uhlans commenced their daring incursions beyond the French frontier, and inaugurated their renown as formidable scouts; disregarding the tradition of employing cavalry in somewhat large detachments, they reconnoitred in every direction, without ever being more in number than fifteen or twenty, and sometimes less. They explored French ground with impunity, and had already advanced as far as Wissembourg and Haguenau with all the greater facility because their appearance created an unaccountable panic.

Filled with a confidence which proved so fatal to them, the French commanders spent their time in the coffee-houses in the town of Metz. After a few hurried words as to the war and the glorious victories in perspective, after the important discussion of the *menu* for the evening and also of the intrigues of those surrounding the Emperor, questions of precedence and greedy ambition were much more the order of the day than the advance of the Prussians or the incursions of their scouts.

These questions were considered as insignificant matters in comparison with the present and future comfort of these gentlemen.

Some of the generals were accompanied by their whole family; others were remarkable for the luxury and magnificence of their equipages. Their names, This is not accurate. and the ranks they held in the army of the Rhine, were inscribed in such gigantic letters on their baggage, that the announcement might have excited the envy of any theatrical manager who went the greatest lengths in such matters.

A few days later, when General Changarnier arrived

at Metz, the first words uttered by the veteran of the African wars was ■ brief censure of the errors of the generals of the Second Empire. "That is not the way to make war," the General contented himself with saying, as he cast ■ contemptuous glance on all these useless retinues.

The Emperor, since assuming the office of Commander-in-chief of the army, had set an example of undeniable activity. Every day his Majesty held long conferences with the generals, and visited the camps without the least pomp.

He might be seen on all the French military lines; and if his actions were afterwards liable to any censure, it is only right to assert that, from the commencement of the war, laying aside his habits of luxury, he set to work with energy.

Movements of troops had been going on for the last two days, and on the 2nd of August, the 2nd army-corps, commanded by General Frossard, advanced as far as Spicheren, in the direction of Saarbruck. Early in the morning the Emperor and the Prince Imperial started for Forbach, with the certainty that an engagement would take place near Saarbruck.

General Frossard had taken up a strong position on the plateau of Spicheren, whence he commanded a view of the whole plain. His artillery was placed about 1700 yards from the gates of Saarbruck, and his army-corps was posted upon the heights surrounding the plateau.

From the summit of this plateau Saarbruck, although partly hidden by a rising in the ground, was attacked at an early hour by the French artillery. At the same time a division of infantry, supported by artillery and the 7th regiment of dragoons, advanced into the plain before Saarbruck, and at about half a mile from the place vigorously commenced a regular attack upon the Prussian outposts.



German troops in great numbers were concentrated at Oltweiler and Durtweiler, so as to prevent any attempt to occupy the valley of the Saar, and Saarbruck itself was defended by 8000 Prussians, perfectly intrenched.

The streets were barricaded ; the houses, which were crenellated in order to allow of the use of musketry, were protected from the artillery by a kind of casemate.

At two o'clock, the division commanded by General Bataille was engaged all along the line; and General Rastoul's brigade, supported by a vigorous artillery-fire well-directed on to the bridge of the Saar, had a serious encounter with the Prussian ambuscades stationed on both sides of the bridge and flanked by a regiment of artillery, the men fighting with courage, and standing fire like old soldiers.

The railway-station, built of brick, had been fortified so ■ to sustain a regular siege ; and the road leading to the Faubourg Saint-Jean had been mined, a fact very well known to the French generals, and rendering the bombardment of the town indispensable. At this moment Colonel Merle, at the head of the 32nd regiment, supported by a powerful artillery and protected by the fire of the French batteries, made a movement to turn the flank of the left, and after a short engagement forced the Prussians to fall back into the town. In spite of their advantageous position and the considerable forces they had within reach, the enemy seemed to have given up all idea of defending themselves. The Prussians retreated in good order, keeping up a perpetual fire, whilst the French advanced with still more impetuosity. The fire of the Germans soon abated, and their black masses, half driven from their positions, ultimately withdrew altogether.

It was then about noon. The Emperor and the Prince Imperial, followed by two generals and six officers of



their staff, had just arrived on horseback and advanced to within 250 yards of the needle-guns.

There they stopped, braving the danger of the bullets whistling over their heads. The young Prince, who at first was affected at the sight of the corpses of two soldiers lying on the ground, raised his *képi* to salute the bullets which gave him his baptism of fire. At this moment a person in the Prince's suite was slightly wounded. It is difficult to understand the object of the Emperor and his son in thus exposing themselves at so short a distance to the fire of the enemy. Whatever may have been the cause, the fact itself is certain. Colonel Merle's movement having succeeded, the French batteries immediately directed their fire upon the town. The Prussians were in retreat all along the line. The mitrailleuses continued their work of destruction, but, by an order of the Emperor, the bombardment was stopped. It appeared that he wished to spare the inhabitants of Saarbruck the horrors of its destruction. By three o'clock the French were masters of every position, but they did not enter the town, a report generally prevailing that it was mined.

The losses of the French amounted to two officers and fifteen men killed and sixty men disabled ; whilst on the side of the Prussians there were about 300 men killed and wounded, besides fifty prisoners they left in the hands of the French.

The engagement at Saarbruck was much more important than was supposed. In commencing operations upon the river Saar, the execution of a previously-conceived strategic plan, which from circumstances was eventually obliged to be abandoned, had been successfully inaugurated, and an important diversion in order to try the strength of the Prussians had formed the chief aim of the French. Saarbruck is an unfortified town containing 9000 inhabitants, and intersected by the Saar.

At a distance of six miles from Forbach the town is accessible from the French side by the bridge on which the engagement commenced in the morning.

The Emperor returned in the evening to Metz, where he received an ovation from the inhabitants. The Prince Imperial, on his return from the battle, made a pen-and-ink sketch of the engagement. The march of the divisions, the encounter, the bridge, and the place on which he stood with the Emperor, although hastily executed, were full of life, and striking from their fidelity. In one corner of the sketch the young Prince had written two lines :—

“ To my friend, Tristan Lambert, the 2nd of August, after having been under fire for the first time.

“ LOUIS NAPOLEON.”

The French attached an exaggerated importance to this victory at the commencement of the campaign, but since the great disasters which have stricken the country they have bitterly regretted their early enthusiasm, and have even condemned the operation as ■ useless feat of arms. The Prussians, on the other hand, have asserted that this easy victory was gained by superior forces against only one of their divisions. Both are wrong and unjust in their assertions. Considering this question from a numerical point of view, there were in this engagement 10,000 Prussians fighting against 7000 French ; and the combatants were equally supported by their respective army-corps, which were within reach, Steinmetz's corps on the north behind Saarbruck, Frossard's corps at Spicheren. If the Prussians had wished it, the engagement might have assumed the proportions of a great battle.

## CHAPTER II.

THE PRUSSIAN ARMIES—ENGAGEMENT AT WISSENBURG—BATTLE OF WOERTH—BATTLE OF FORBACH—INCIDENTS.

AT the beginning of the campaign the Prussian army was divided into twelve corps :—The 1st (army-corps of Eastern Prussia), commanded by General Manteuffel ; the 2nd (Pomerania), by General Franceski ; the 3rd (Brandebourg), by von Alvensleben II. ; the 4th (Prussian Saxony), by von Alvensleben I. ; the 5th (Posen), by von Kirchbach ; the 6th (Silesian), by von Tumplinz ; the 7th (Westphalian), by von Zastrow ; the 8th (Rhenish Prussia), by von Goeben ; the 9th (Schleswig Holstein), by Momstein ; the 10th (Hanoverian), by von Voigts-Rhetz ; the 11th (Hesse and Nassau), by von Böse ; the 12th (Saxony), by the Prince Royal of Saxony. The guard was under the command of Prince Augustus of Wurtemberg. These twelve corps, to which must be added the armies of Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and Baden, were divided into four armies, making up an effective force of 510,000 men.

The Army of the North, which protected the Prussian territory against a French invasion from the Baltic, was commanded by General Vogel von Falkenstein.

The army forming the right wing, commanded by Prince Frederick Charles, had its head-quarters at Trèves.

The central army, under the command of General von Steinmetz, was pushed forward into the valley of the Saar.

The army forming the left wing, commanded by the Crown Prince, had entered the Palatinate, with three Prussian corps and the Bavarians.

The King of Prussia reserved to himself the post of commander-in-chief of all the armies. General von Moltke, the great strategist and real commander-in-chief, was his chief of the staff.

The Prussian armies were, in every respect, far superior to those of the French. The military science of the commanders, the solid acquirements of the officers, the discipline and good organization of the troops, their numbers and their artillery, have remained unrivalled up to the present day. The Prussian army is unquestionably the ruling military element of our epoch. Daring, patience, and skill, qualities indispensable to a rising nation, have characterized all their conquests, from Albert of Brandebourg down to the present king.

From the time of the insignificant margraviate, down to that of the powerful kingdom of Prussia of the present day, the successes of this power have been systematically pursued; and now that the European balance of power has become a thing of the past, Europe will perceive, perhaps too late, that the descendants of the petty margrave, who first comprehended the future of his country, have dealt a terrible blow at her liberty and future independence. All the Teutonic princes have inherited the same ambitious spirit, and, faithful to the native idea, have at every period paid a large tribute to the dangers inherent to their conquests.

In the present war we saw all the members of the different royal families, from the nearest relation of the monarch down to the chief of the smallest German state, taking an active part in the campaign either as commanders or in subordinate posts.

In order to render clearer the narrative which follows, I must explain to my readers that I was the military

correspondent of *The Standard*, and marched with the French armies, after having at the beginning of the campaign obtained permission to follow the operations; I was therefore an eye-witness of the principal events which I am about to relate. Impartiality and truth will be my chief guides.

After describing in a few words the engagement at Wissembourg and the battle of Woerth, I shall pass on to the account of the battle of Forbach, at which I was present during the greater part of the day.

On the 4th of August, a party of the vanguard of Marshal MacMahon was attacked at Wissembourg by a considerable Prussian force; three brigades of the division of General Douai, and one brigade of light cavalry had received orders to oppose the enemy, and prevent by every means its entrance into the French territory. Wissembourg is a small town, containing 6000 inhabitants, and situated on the Lauter, on the borders of the French frontier. The town is one of the stations on the railway from Strasbourg to Mannheim, and MacMahon's aim, in sending some brigades to defend this route, was principally to conceal the movements of his army-corps from the enemy, if he effected a counter-march.

Between twelve and one o'clock in the day, two regiments of the line, two regiments of chasseurs, a battalion of Turcos, a regiment of zouaves, and a brigade of light cavalry, all commanded by General Abel Douai, marched out of Wissembourg, and crossing the Lauter, took up their position on the heights overlooking the plateau of Geisburg.

The 5th and 11th Prussian army-corps, commanded by Generals von Kirchbach and von Böse, coming from Bergzabern along the Landau road, attacked the French outposts. The struggle soon became terrible; for several hours the French fought with desperate bravery, the



zouaves and Turcos vying with each other in spirit and heroism. Every inequality of ground was obstinately defended by the Prussians, who, arriving in never-ending masses, gained ground. At this moment, the Crown Prince moving the 2nd Bavarian army-corps along the Lamb-Wissembourg road, passed above Geisburg and fell on the rear of the French, thus getting them between two fires. He captured 500 prisoners, and took possession of the tents and camp-stores.

Notwithstanding their critical position, the French continued the fight with great bravery ; but after having resisted with an obstinacy worthy of their high reputation, they were obliged to retire towards the Col du Pigeonnier, on the road to Bitsche. General Abel Douai was killed in this engagement, in which the French, although beaten, displayed immense courage. The losses were great ; nearly 2000 soldiers and officers were killed or disabled, and MacMahon, on hearing the result of the action, was obliged to concentrate his troops and alter his plans, which had been destroyed in a moment by the brilliant strategy of the Crown Prince of Prussia.

Following up his victory over the division of General Douai, the Crown Prince immediately took the direction of the valley of Niederbronn with all his army, 120,000 strong ; the next day he attacked the army-corps commanded by Marshal MacMahon, whose effective force of 33,000 men was composed of the *élite* of the army of Africa, and was supported by a powerful artillery. The battle commenced at Freishwiller and Woerth, a small town situated between Saultz-sans-Forêts and Niederbronn, and ended at Reischoffen, near Haguenau, in the total defeat of the French. This battle took place on Saturday, the 6th of August. The chief centre of resistance was on the plateau of Woerth, where Marshal MacMahon had taken up a very strong position. The Prussians, protected by the woods of Haguenau, made a persistent

attack, covered by their formidable artillery. In vain did the mitrailleuses make frightful gaps in their columns; every regiment decimated by the fire of the French artillery was followed by fresh divisions emerging from the woods, turning every obstacle and taking advantage of every inequality of the ground. The Prussian soldiers executed their manœuvres with the same precision and coolness as if they had been taking part in a mere parade.

The struggle was a terrible one, for the Prussian artillery caused frightful carnage in the French ranks. The Turcos, zouaves, and infantry of the line fought with heroic courage, although outnumbered in the proportion of four to one; various charges made by the cuirassiers and chasseurs followed one another with admirable spirit; but every time the squadrons were obliged to fall back before a superior force, after having sustained considerable losses. In one of these charges, the first regiment of cuirassiers, just as it was engaged with a Prussian column, was almost entirely destroyed by a battery masked behind a battalion. The colonel of this regiment had his head carried away by a cannon-shot, and, horrible to relate, his decapitated corpse, still seated firmly in the saddle, was carried along more than 200 yards before it fell.

In the midst of the fight, a battalion of Turcos succeeded, under the leadership of its commander, in making an opening with irresistible impetuosity in the middle of the Prussian columns; but after having accomplished this heroic deed, being surrounded by masses of troops, it was obliged to lay down its arms.

"Then the rest of the army has not followed us?" exclaimed, with astonishment, the brave commander, who had fancied that he had been penetrating into the midst of the Prussian battalions with the whole French army.

The struggle had lasted the whole day ; the trumpets sounded the retreat, and the remains of MacMahon's army-corps were contesting inch by inch the field of battle, covered with the corpses of the French. Some of these brave soldiers refused to beat a retreat, and isolated engagements were carried on until late in the night.

The defeat of the French was an irreparable one ; they had 13,000 men killed or disabled. In the morning, when MacMahon, who had remained all night on the heights of Phalsbourg, endeavoured to take account of his losses, and to rally the remains of his decimated divisions, the brave marshal, who had been perfectly inflexible during the whole period of the action, felt himself overcome by an unaccountable sadness. Yielding to emotion, the tears were seen trickling from his eyes, and, crushed under the weight of this disaster, his head was bowed down by an emotion of sorrowful despair.

All the war *matériel*, tents, provisions, the military train, the officers' baggage, and even the personal property of the marshal, fell into the hands of the enemy.

Soldiers forming part of all the army-corps arrived in disorder on the plateau of Phalsbourg, and endeavoured to re-form their ranks in the midst of the confusion unavoidable at such a time. It was a heterogeneous mass, composed of the remains of the army which had hitherto been considered the first in the world. On that spot might be seen a perfect chaos of chasseurs, zouaves, and troops of the infantry, anxiously looking at one another, and still unable to believe the immense calamity which had just befallen them. It was truly a heart-rending spectacle to behold with what anxiety these brave men, still blackened with the powder of the fight, were seeking about and counting one another over, in

the hope of finding some friend, escaped like themselves from the fatal destiny which from this time appears to have weighed heavy on France.

An impartial writer must add that the loss of the Prussians was enormous, and could not be estimated at less than 16,000 men killed or wounded.

Incident followed incident with a completely bewildering rapidity; fresh misfortunes caused past disasters to be forgotten. MacMahon had been defeated at Woerth, while General Frossard, driven back from Saarbruck, was pursued by General Steinmetz as far as St.

General Frossard had retreated on Saaregumines.

Avold.

Knowing that an important engagement had taken place in the direction of Spicheren, I left Metz on horseback on the morning of the 7th of August, and leaving my steed a short distance from St. Avold, I had the good luck to find a train which was going to Forbach; I was thus enabled to reach the battle-field at four o'clock in the afternoon, at the moment when the Prussians, who were masters of the position of Spicheren, were threatening Forbach.

It is difficult to describe in a few lines the dreadful scene which I witnessed; but I require to be brief, for I must hasten on to the great tragedy which, beginning at Borny, ended at Sedan.

Since ten o'clock in the morning the army of General von Steinmetz, 70,000 strong, after having recaptured the positions occupied by the French at Saarbruck, had advanced as far as Spicheren, and vigorously attacked the army-corps of General Frossard. The three infantry divisions of the general were commanded by Generals Bataille, Verger, and Laveaucoupet, and the cavalry division by General Michel; the artillery, under command of General Gagneur, was composed of six batteries and several mitrailleuses.

Had not joined.

The battle lasted the whole day, and from the different



movements executed, the probable result remained undecided until five o'clock in the evening. Towards noon the French were in full assurance of victory; General Frossard, with almost inconceivable thoughtlessness, had even left the battle-field, after having given some orders, only regarding the affair as an unimportant engagement. He passed several hours quietly

Not accurate.

at the house of his friend, the mayor of Forbach, partaking of an excellent dinner, while discussing with this worthy magistrate the profundity of his strategical combinations. While he was thus abandoning himself to the charms of conversation, fresh German columns arrived on the field of battle, and the French soldiers, commanded by brave General Bataille, had to sustain the impetuous attack of an enemy whose numbers were increasing every moment.

Message after message was sent to the general-in-chief, but they did not succeed in bringing him back any quicker to his post; and, instead of adopting a new plan in order to effect a retreat, which might have saved the day, the French divisions continued to follow the previous orders, and succumbed by degrees under the irresistible attack of 70,000 Prussians. Their courage and devotion worthy of Spartans, their dash, their attacks at the point of the bayonet, the well-sustained fire of the mitrailleuses, and the brilliant charges of the cavalry, were insufficient to stop the progress of these formidable masses, coolly advancing under the murderous fire of the French, and marking the road they followed with the traces of their blood. Later on in the evening the struggle was concentrated round the town of Forbach; and such was the enthusiasm of the combatants, that when on both sides whole regiments were lost sight of in the smoke, and a vista suddenly opened through the gloom, it was frightful to perceive that half of the soldiers had valiantly succumbed.

I was in company with M. de Katow, a French jour-



nalist, and we were near the environs of Forbach, when I witnessed the defence of the camp of Merlebach by the French cavalry. Filled with the deepest emotion, I followed with my eyes the gap made in the midst of the Prussian columns by the 7th regiment of dragoons, commanded by the Duke of Elchingen, a grandson of Marshal Ney, and by two other regiments of chasseurs. The glorious and brave actions which took place during this affair might be counted by hundreds, but all this sublime heroism was nevertheless useless. The efforts of the cavalry were arrested by the powerful artillery of the enemy, and the well-sustained fire of the needle-guns drove the French regiments from the last positions, which they were still defending with all the energy of despair.

The contest was now kept up in the streets. It was eight o'clock; the Prussians were completely victorious, and the remains of Frossard's army-corps were in full retreat along the St. Avold road. The general had

~~The general had~~ disappeared during the confusion, and not disappeared. Forbach was in flames. Dreadful scenes were taking place in the town. The inhabitants, giving themselves up to the greatest terror, were flying, not only from the destroying element, but also from the shower of bullets, which only increased as the soldiers retreated and the enemy progressively advanced. In the midst of the struggle I had lost my friend, and was utterly overjoyed when I found him a few minutes later, emerging from a burning house and carrying in his arms two children he had just saved from certain destruction, whom at that very moment he was restoring to their disconsolate mother. My courageous friend, Paul de Katow, was slightly wounded; and when I congratulated him on his heroic action, he answered me like a man quite unconscious of having performed a noble deed.

Through corpses and surging crowds of fugitives, we were at last lucky enough to reach the railway station, just as a train, already more than full, was starting. We jumped on to the locomotive, and several hours later passed through St. Avold at full speed, arriving at one o'clock in the morning at the station at Metz.

The Emperor and his staff were at the station, ready to start for the field of battle in order to witness the engagement; but the sad news of the total defeat of Frossard, brought by a messenger riding on an engine, changed the Emperor's plans, and his Majesty was observed to return in great haste to the Prefecture. The deepest consternation was plainly depicted on his face.

Of the 30,000 men commanded by General Frossard, 10,000 were killed or taken prisoners. The 3000 Germans themselves owed to having experienced enormous losses; 10,000 were placed *hors de combat*, but the victorious columns of von Steinmetz were indefatigable in their ardour and, intoxicated by their success, followed up during the night their enormous victory, and in the morning they were already in occupation of St. Avold, and were masters of the railway. It is impossible to describe the effect produced at Metz by the news of two terrible blows inflicted on two of the principal army-corps.

The defeat of MacMahon and the rout of Frossard, were the disasters announced in the morning to the civil and military population of Metz. Every one comprehended the magnitude of the danger, and the Imperial despatches, dictated by a feeling of despair, were far from reviving confidence for the future. An immediate appeal to the nation, sent with the utmost despatch by the telegraphic wires, spread an unnecessary terror among the French people—ever so readily discouraged—when, on the contrary, they ought to have been reas-

sured. At the moment when the nation had the greatest need of hope for the future, the Government, in making a direct appeal to it, dealt a fatal blow at its own power, and to the prestige of eighteen years of a glorious reign. It was a grievous error on the part either of the Emperor or his councillors. Instead of decreeing measures betraying their weakness, and making an immediate appeal to the nation, their proper course would have been to concentrate within themselves all their energy and all their resources. Napoleon III. should have called to his aid the daring of his earlier years, and rather than collapse morally under the weight of such unexpected disasters, he should have faced his position with more coolness, and should have immediately taken those energetic measures to which he did not make up his mind until three days later. An appeal to the nation at a moment so critical could have but one effect—that of discouraging a great people, of destroying its confidence in its own strength, and of persuading it that the state of affairs was still worse than the official reports set forth.

It was a singular thing that every one up to the superior officers, admitted without hesitation that there was no more hope for France; and “All is lost!” was the motto which for three days was substituted for the taunting rhodomontade of a military promenade to Berlin.

“The German Empire is an accomplished fact,” was the phrase everywhere in use. Every one was persuaded that all the victories that the French might gain in this campaign, would not shake the influence and prestige of Prussia. This was the general opinion, and I must confess that I shared in it to a great extent. But I repeat again, that there is no excuse for the French Government having so suddenly disheartened the nation, after having fostered for so long false ideas

as to its power and its military greatness. It was not the duty of the Government to throw an immense veil of mourning over a whole people, who, in order to resist the enemy, only asked for encouragement, and needed to be sustained by an unshakable confidence in an immediate revenge.

## CHAPTER III.

AT METZ—THE NEW COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF—INTRIGUES—BATTLE OF BORNY—STAFF OF THE EMPEROR—BATTLES OF GRAVELOTTE AND MARS-LA-TOUR.

ON that fatal day, Sunday the 7th of August, when the dreadful news of successive defeats had circulated all over the town of Metz, a sudden panic seized the inhabitants; the natural exaggeration, so inherent in the French mind, created imaginary dangers, and a large number of people already fancied the Prussians were even at the very gates of the fortress. Every carriage and vehicle was hired to carry off those who were alarmed and their families far from the scene of war. The Emperor himself prepared to depart, and it was stated that the Imperial head-quarters and the staff of the Army of the Rhine would be immediately transferred to another town of the interior.

There is an error here; no order for movement had been given at this time. It was with a feeling of sadness that, at a later hour of the day, I saw the equipages of the Emperor and several officers of his staff leave Metz in great haste, for this was the sign of a grievous calamity; but, at the same time, a happy contrast was presented to me to cheer my mind: a large number of citizens of the town had met together in the court of the Hôtel de Metz, and there, swearing to lay aside all feelings of political antagonism, pledged themselves to unite as brothers in the defence of the town.

In the lower classes of society the agitation almost



amounted to frenzy; groups of workmen paraded the streets of the town, vowing vengeance, and stopping every looker-on whose face seemed strange to them. Several English and American correspondents were ill-treated by the populace, and the authorities found it necessary to put them under arrest in order to save their lives. The infuriated populace would have massacred them, believing these honourable persons to be Prussian spies.

After the battle of Woerth, in consequence of the serious losses which the Crown Prince had experienced in his victory, he did not immediately continue his forward movement, and on Monday evening his headquarters were at Soultz, to the east of Woerth.

The king had advanced as far as Hombourg, fifteen miles from the French frontier; von Steinmetz had his head-quarters a little to the north of Saarbruck; Prince Frederic Charles was at Bielcastel, ten miles to the east of Saarbruck; Forbach was occupied by the vanguard of the army of the right wing; and the army of the centre had crossed the Saar, and taken possession of Saarguemines.

On the part of the French, MacMahon had retreated on Saverne, and was proceeding towards Nancy; de Failly was manœuvring to effect a junction with MacMahon; Douay was stationed at Belfort; and Canrobert had arrived at Metz from Châlons with two divisions of his army-corps.

Round Metz the corps of Bazaine, Ladmirault, and Frossard, and the imperial guard, under the command of Bourbaki, were concentrated, awaiting the changes which were to take place in the chief command of the Army of the Rhine.

Public opinion had long since been roused against the incapacity of Marshal Leboeuf, which was regarded as the principal cause of the first reverses. He was dismissed

from his high position; the Emperor himself resigned the post of commander-in-chief of the Army of the Rhine; there was now only one grave question to solve, viz. the nomination of ■ general popular enough to inspire confidence, and courageous enough to accept such ■ heavy responsibility. Changarnier, the old and popular African general, had arrived at Metz; he came at a moment of danger to proffer his sword to the monarch who signed the order for his imprisonment in 1851, and had sent him into exile; he came to place his long tried experience at the service of his endangered country. The old general was heartily welcomed by the Emperor, and from this time the veteran occupied the chief place at the council of war, and exercised a most powerful influence over its decisions.

At a meeting of the commanders of corps, the marshals of France, and the staff, the subject in question was the important discussion as to the choice of a new commander-in-chief. The Emperor presided, and, after a few touching remarks on the reasons which induced him to resign the command, he advised his lieutenants to weigh well their resolutions, and to put aside all feelings of ambition in face of the sad events which had just taken place, and the immense task which they were about to undertake. For his part he was determined not to influence their decisions in any way. Having spoken thus the Emperor covered his face with his hands, and silently awaited the nomination of his successor to the command of the Army of the Rhine.

The Emperor made up his mind without speaking to any one about it. There was not, therefore, any council of war.

The meeting was a stormy one. The court favourites and the drawing-room generals of the Second Empire, those selfish men who, taking advantage of the kindness which their sovereign had shown them, did not shrink from drawing him down into misfortunes, perhaps unprecedented in history, could not form the idea of

relinquishing their ambitious projects, and of submitting to a general who was pointed out by his rank, his accomplishments, and the prestige of his glorious campaigns. Changarnier's influence triumphed over all these intrigues, and Marshal Bazaine was appointed to the command of the Army of the Rhine, in conjunction with MacMahon, who was to take the chief command of his own corps, as well as those of de Failly, of Felix Douay, and of the new columns which were forming at Châlons.

I will not discuss the strategic errors at the commencement of the campaign; but the plan laid down by Marshal Leboeuf, or by the Emperor, was evidently regardless of all the rules of strategy adopted by great generals in modern warfare. The great captain, the founder of the Imperial dynasty, instead of scattering his troops along a too extended line, concentrated them in compact masses, so as not to bring forward his reserves until an opportune moment; and the wonders achieved by the greatest military genius of modern times ought to have served as an example to his successors.

The fact of de Failly having been placed in a position which prevented him from coming to the assistance of MacMahon when attacked by the Crown Prince, is one of those mistakes on which history will have to pass its judgment—we say more, its censure. It is a complete setting at nought of the most elementary rules of military strategy. It is just the same in the case of Frossard, who, being left to his own resources at Forbach, furnished a second instance of the negligence or the incapacity of the advisers of the first commander-in-chief of the Army of the Rhine.

Upon taking the command Marshal Bazaine briefly explained, in an order dated from head-quarters, the efficient measures he intended to take; he added that, aban-

It would take too long to explain the position of the different army-corps; but Failly could have helped

and as a matter of fact he did protect his retreat. With regard to Frossard, there were not far from him several divisions which ought to, and could have flown to his assistance.

cessor, he was preparing to act at once with the greatest energy.

France had at last got rid of the traditions of the Empire, which, for some years, had granted everything to favour, confining itself to occasionally conferring some few insignificant recompenses on real merit. The famous generals of the Imperial antechamber were descending into subordinate ranks, and better results were hoped for from a change both so new and so radical.

Bazaine, the new commander-in-chief, immediately gave orders that every one should go to his post, as well as to the encampment which was assigned to him. After a great many countermarches in the direction of Boulay, Saint-Avold, and all along the German frontier, the Army of the Rhine was on the 13th of August encamped in a spot near enough to Metz to be covered by the cannon in the detached forts of this stronghold, said to be the first in Europe. His army was composed of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th corps, the whole of the imperial guard, and Canrobert's two divisions, the total forming an effective force of 130,000 men. The *élite* of the French army was thus united under the command of Marshal Bazaine.

From sure sources of information I had learnt that the Emperor and his staff would leave Metz on the 14th of August, whilst the entire army would fall back upon Verdun. In consequence of this information I went on Sunday morning to the camp of the imperial guard; and it was owing to this circumstance that I had the opportunity of being present at the battle of Borny. But I do not wish to anticipate events; my story will be brief; I must only previously announce to the reader that, having been by chance in the midst of the battle, all the accounts which follow are strictly correct.



It was about one o'clock in the afternoon, on the 14th of August, when Bazaine ordered the retreat of the army on the Verdun road. In the morning there had been slight skirmishes between the outposts; a battle seemed imminent; but the enemy, under cover of the woods of Borny, had not manifested the least intention to accept the combat.

I ought to say, that while these events were occurring at Metz, the army of Prince Frederick Charles had effected a junction with that of General von Steinmetz, and that two days before they had taken up a semi-circular position between Boulay, Saint-Avold, and Faulquemont. Their united forces amounted to 220,000 men. In the morning of this same day their rear-guard had taken up its position on the Boulay road, at the point of intersection leading to Borny. The Prussians likewise occupied the road from Bellevoir to Borny, above the forest of that name, the trees of which concealed a part of their infantry.

At two o'clock in the afternoon the advanced-guard of Bazaine's army, composed of the 2nd corps and part of the cavalry, crossed the Moselle by a bridge of boats, which had been thrown across a few hours before, whilst the baggage, the stores, and the provisions of the army also passed over the river at different points, and took the direction of Longeville. The equipages of the Emperor had already gone, Prince Napoleon had followed, and half an hour later the Emperor himself left Metz, going in the same direction.

At three o'clock the 3rd corps, commanded by General Decaen, the 4th corps, commanded by General Ladmirault, and the imperial guard, under the command of Bourbaki, also broke up their camp, when they suddenly saw the Prussians getting ready for the attack. Some of their regiments took skirmishing order, whilst others made an offensive movement in front of the woods of.



Borny and in the direction of Grizy and Mercy-lès-Metz. It was impossible to mistake their intentions; and the invitation to dinner, which I had received and accepted from some officers of the imperial guard, afforded me the opportunity to follow the fight in all its details, and to relate in these pages all the incidents of which I was the witness.

At the moment of the attack, the French troops commanded by Marshal Bazaine faced Borny, Grizy, and Mercy-lès-Metz, whilst the imperial guard, forming the reserve, was posted near the fort of Queleu. A violent artillery fire was soon heard on all sides, and the Prussian *landwehr*, preceding the German columns, rushed rapidly forward to the attack. On both sides cannon and mitrailleuses commenced their murderous work. I stood near an ammunition waggon, and in a few minutes I became the spectator of a scene of indescribable confusion. Men were falling all round me; bullets whistled in my ears, falling a few steps farther on, and carrying death into the midst of the battalions.

It was difficult to preserve one's coolness in the presence of such a terrible massacre. The cries of the wounded, the curses of the soldiers who were falling under the volleys, the furious rage of their friends and their thirst for vengeance, all these things had something of the fantastic about them, such as we are sensible of in a hideous dream.

But alas! it was something more than a nightmare. Some of my friends, among whom was Baron de Vatry, commanding one of the battalions of the guard, passed close to me and tried to make me understand the danger to which I was needlessly exposing myself; but their words sounded in my ears like a mere whisper amid the terrible din of the battle. They soon disappeared in the smoke, and I remained a spectator of this dreadful scene. Whilst taking a few notes so as to

convey to others my sad impressions, I felt I could never tire in admiring the grandeur of the spectacle and the immensity of this formidable struggle.

A battery of artillery, in which there was a mitrailleuse, made a terrific carnage in the ranks of the Prussians, and at each report I heard frantic bravos proclaiming the fresh exploits of this fearful engine of war. The firing was so well directed and its precision was so great, that each shot cut down the Prussian battalions almost entirely as they emerged from the wood. I must add that the Germans fought with desperate energy, and that their artillery, answering ours with a murderous fire, literally destroyed the French regiments.

At seven o'clock in the evening the Prussians made a movement of retreat. A mitrailleuse had at two different times been captured from the French ; and although this is only one of the thousand incidents of the battle, I ought to mention it, because it led to an important result. For the space of an hour the greatest efforts of the French had been directed towards dislodging the Prussians from the woods of Borny, where their troops found a natural rampart which protected them against our attacks. The brave colonel of the 44th regiment of infantry, when recapturing the mitrailleuse from the enemy, forced out of the wood an innumerable mass of soldiers, who precipitated themselves like a torrent upon the French divisions. The dispute for this mitrailleuse was obviously nothing but a pretence, for it was soon evident that the Prussians were following the same tactics which had served them so well at Forbach and at Woerth. These tactics consisted in concealing their real force, composed principally of their best divisions, and when the battle seemed to be decided in favour of their adversary, in immediately throwing upon the enemy these powerful masses of fresh troops, and thus in one moment changing defeat into victory. But

on this occasion Marshal Bazaine had prepared a surprise for them.

He had held in reserve the imperial guard, commanded by Bourbaki. Its artillery, placed in an elevated position, began to take the defensive; the grenadiers made a forward movement, and from that moment till a quarter to nine I could have fancied myself in the midst of an eruption of Vesuvius. The fort of Queleu, with its powerful batteries, swept the flank of the marching columns whilst the cavalry regiments charged at full speed on the wings. At this moment the Prussians retreated with a loss of 13,000 to 14,000 men killed or disabled. The French losses amounted to 8000 men.

Forty thousand Frenchmen had fought against 100,000 Prussians; and the great disparity between the losses sustained on both sides solely arose from a false movement on the part of the Prussians, bringing them in their retreat right under the fire of the fort of Queleu.

General Decaen was wounded in the leg, General de Castagny had an arm carried off, and Marshal Bazaine himself received a slight contusion on the head.

General de Castagny was only slightly wounded.

The Emperor, who during the battle had remained at the village of Longeville, on the Verdun road, and three miles from Borny, visited the battle-field in the evening. It was a mournful spectacle. Under the fort of Queleu heaps of corpses, piled one upon another to the height of more than a yard, illumined by the moon, cast their sinister shadows upon the ground. With respect to myself, marching with the imperial guard, I took the Verdun road in order to sleep at Moulins, which I reached about one o'clock in the morning.

The little village of Moulins-lès-Metz, situated about three miles and a half from Metz, presented a truly curious aspect. During the night and on the morning of the 15th of August, the whole of the French army

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had passed through the village or encamped in its vicinity. The hotels, the private houses, and the barns were occupied by the officers. As for the roads, they were so blocked up with soldiers, waggon, horses, and artillery, that it took an hour to travel half a mile.

From the roof of a diligence, where I had vainly attempted to sleep, I witnessed several scenes of a truly free-and-easy character. A dragoon, who was leading a miserable cow which he had captured in the neighbourhood, was disputing about his booty with a foot-soldier who claimed a share of it. "This cow is all I have to look to," repeated the half-tipsy dragoon, pushing away his friend, who was in the same condition; but the two soldiers were soon reconciled, and agreed to share amicably the proceeds of the sale as soon as it was effected.

Farther on a zouave walked along with the most wonderful trophy that I have ever seen. Four geese were majestically balanced upon his shoulders, whilst his loins were ornamented with poultry of all sorts, which formed a regular belt round him. He went round the camp, selling to all bidders the domestic animals which he had carried off from the neighbouring farms. A great number of these soldiers had taken part in the battle of that day, and in consequence of their exploits, they thought proper to procure a good meal at the expense of the farmers who had deserted their houses as soon as the firing had begun.

The generals and the officers of the staff made their way through the crowd. At daybreak General Canrobert, in the midst of his aides-de-camp, and preceded by his flag-bearer, was inspecting the various camps, as well as the military trains, when he suddenly retired in the direction of Longeville. The fact had just been ascertained that some Prussian divisions were surrounding the neighbourhood and were threatening the imperial



quarters. In fact, an hour later several bombs were thrown into the courtyard of the house occupied by the Emperor: a colonel and a few men were killed, and ■ skirmishing fire commenced from all the adjacent heights.

Generally speaking, "shells" should be written everywhere in place of "bombs;" bombs are only fired out of mortars.

I had lost my horse, and was seeking for some fresh means of conveyance, when I happened to meet two journalists; one the correspondent of the *Paris Journal*, the other of the *Étoile Belge*, of Brussels. They had left Metz in fear of the blockade, and we agreed to start for Verdun, so as to be able to forward our correspondence. A diligence from Boulay, which had been compelled to leave the road on account of the Prussian invasion, happened to be in the village. After a somewhat long parley, we persuaded the conductor to convey us immediately to Verdun. As money was for us only a question of detail, the high price that we offered was a decisive argument for our man. We left at eight o'clock in the morning, but the road was so obstructed by soldiers and baggage-waggons that we took two hours to reach Maisonneuve, which is not more than ■ mile and a half from Moulins.

We arrived, therefore, at Moulins at ten o'clock on the morning of the 15th. The village was full of troops; a regiment was posted in skirmishing order on the summit of a little hill, whilst chasseurs and hussars were exploring the country. We were engaged in taking a cup of coffee, when we heard the sound of a cannonade in the vicinity of Metz. A general panic ensued; the equipages of the Emperor started at full gallop along a parallel road leading to Verdun. A French correspondent who had just that instant joined us, became so excited that he leapt on to one of the army baggage-waggons, and was lost to our gaze. We endeavoured to force our diligence into the ranks of the train of military carriages, but the

gendarmes opposed the attempt. My companions proposed to abandon our vehicle, but I declared that I was determined to retain it, and walking straight up to a gendarme, I asserted that I had obtained from his commander a special authority to follow the military train with my diligence. In his hurry he gave ■ blind confidence to my somewhat reckless assertion, and we were enabled to rejoin the train. I must confess that every one appeared anxious, for the cannonade continued, and lasted for an hour and a half longer.

The road we were following was deeply sunk between high banks ; on our right, on the top of the heights, the German skirmishers were replying, with a well sustained fire, to the French companies that were posted on our left ; the bullets naturally passed over our heads, killing or wounding here and there a few soldiers who were following our road. We were thus travelling under ■ double fire of skirmishers, and amidst a crowd of fugitives seized with a panic of terror.

I saw several officers of the Emperor's staff galloping at full speed, and stopping every now and then to ask us if we had seen the imperial train. I pointed out to one of them the road that had been taken by the equipages of the sovereign, but he did not appear to understand anything about my explanation, and again commenced his furious gallop across country.

He left on horseback with his staff, by the Roman road ; the equipages went by the main road.

Our diligence, with its three horses, slowly followed the military trains ; the Prussian skirmishers had abandoned the summit of the hills, and their fire had ceased. We were surrounded by both officers and soldiers who, for the last twenty-four hours, had not been able to get at any victuals. We shared liberally with them the provisions we had collected, and were painfully impressed with the bad management of the French commissariat, which sometimes left the greatest part of the troops

without any rations whatever for a period of two or three days.

The culpable carelessness of an administration so proud of its good organization was, I can most assuredly assert, one of the principal causes of the French reverses. In my opinion, the military intendants of the army ought to have been brought before a council of war to answer for a negligence which proved so fatal to our troops.

It was about four o'clock when we reached a plateau, from whence the eye embraces the whole valley of the Meuse, and the town of Metz: we likewise commanded the whole of the surrounding country. Masses of Prussians were encamped about three miles away, and some of their columns fronted the village of Gravelotte. Near this village, and occupying a portion of the defiles we had just quitted, the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th army-corps were drawn up in order of battle, the Guard forming the reserve. Their line of battle extended from *la Ferme* to the village of Gravelotte. Some of the regiments were spreading out in skirmishing order, whilst others were carrying out evolutions towards the lines of the enemy. A battle was imminent, and the plan of the Prussians evidently was that of cutting off the retreat of the French towards Verdun.

The imperial quarters, and the head-quarters of Marshal Bazaine were in the village. I saw the Emperor there. The Emperor Napoleon and the Prince Imperial had stopped at the door of an inn. The young Prince, notwithstanding he was so pale, looked well in his uniform, and had it not been for the Star of the Legion of Honour which glittered on his breast, he might have been taken for a young student in his holiday dress.

In spite of all these preparations, the engagement did not take place that evening; and early the next morning the Emperor, the Prince, and their suite, left in the

direction of Verdun on the way to the camp at Châlons. The imperial train was escorted by the 2nd and 3rd regiments of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, supported by a regiment of artillery with its batteries.

There was no artillery.

On Tuesday, the 16th, Marshal Bazaine gave the order to continue the movement of retreat towards Verdun. Frossard, at the head of the 2nd corps, opened the march; but just as he was approaching Vionville, the Prussians made their appearance on the south, on his left flank. The general immediately put himself in an attitude to receive them, and then a vigorous attack commenced. The 2nd corps steadily sustained the first onset, and awaited the arrival of the 3rd corps, commanded by Ladmirault, and of the 4th, under the orders of General Decaen and of Marshal Canrobert, which came to its assistance, and in succession took part in the action. About two o'clock the battle was general all along the line, from Doncourt to Vionville; the armies were operating on the two roads leading to Verdun, exactly to the right of Gravelotte, where the imperial guard were engaged, under the command of General Bourbaki.

The Prussians set immense forces in line of battle: more than 200,000 men, commanded by General von Steinmetz and Prince Frederick Charles, were engaged in this affair. Their attacks were rapid, vigorous, and oft-repeated, but always repulsed by the French. The line of battle extended over a length of seven miles; the ground was undulating and intersected with rivulets up to a point beyond Rezonville. The action lasted from nine o'clock in the morning until night, and the Prussians were repulsed along the whole line, notwithstanding the arrival at nightfall of a corps of fresh troops, 30,000 strong, which came with the intention of cutting off the left wing of the French army.

The loss was immense on both sides, and the battle of



Gravelotte may be regarded as one of the most sanguinary of the present century. There were not less than 40,000 men killed or disabled, and the greatest proportion was, as usual, on the side of the Prussians.

Marshal Bazaine had repulsed the enemy, and had remained in possession of the ground he had gained. The 2nd corps, commanded by General Frossard, and the cavalry of General Forton performed prodigies of valour, but God knows at what price. They lost a great number of soldiers before the arrival of the 4th corps, and of the divisions coming from Rezonville. In one of these furious combats, General Bataille, commanding the second division of the 2nd corps, was severely wounded.

I must here pay a just tribute to the bravery of the Prussians, to their able tactics, as well as to the excellent discipline and steadiness of their columns, marching in close order under a murderous fire. During the greater part of the day they were able to maintain the offensive with ■ certain advantage.

In the very thickest of the *mêlée* a regiment of Uhlans played a glorious part. It charged the very staff of the marshal, and killed twenty men of his escort, including the captain who commanded it. This glorious action deserves to be mentioned. These regiments of Uhlans, however, composed as they are of the *élite* of the German youth, form wonderful cavalry soldiers; and when they are employed as scouts, there are none to rival them.

The 17th of August was employed by Marshal Bazaine in completing his stores, in burying the dead, and in conveying the wounded to Metz. The Prussians appear to have performed the same duties, although they continued their movements for the attack of the 18th.

However glorious for the French arms the battle of Gravelotte or Vionville may have been, it was far from being decisive, as events have since fatally proved. It



became evident to all that the retreat to Verdun and Châlons could not be effected without fighting at least one more battle, and that the Prussians would actively pursue their plan of cutting off Bazaine's retreat and driving him back into Metz.

The carrying out of General von Moltke's strategy had just received a serious check, owing to the success of the French army; and it was easy to foresee that the Prussians would seek, by renewed efforts, to secure at any price the most important object of the campaign, viz. the complete separation of communication between the army of the Rhine and that of Châlons.

If, on the day following the battle, Bazaine had continued his retreat on Verdun, which had been rendered practicable by his victory at Gravelotte, he would have avoided the fatal battle of the 18th, and prevented his army from being cut off. But he lost a precious opportunity in collecting the wounded and burying the dead.

On the 18th of August the Prussian troops, who had received considerable reinforcements from the reserves of the king, attacked the French army, the centre of which occupied the village of Mars-la-Tour. The number of the Germans might amount to 220,000 men; their lines extended from Vigneulles to Sainte-Marie-aux-Chênes, as far as the quarries of Jaumont, in the direction of Briey. These quarries, extending over three miles, are situate about nine miles from Metz; and the new forts, constructed during the last few years in the latter place, were built with stones dug from these quarries.

Two roads lead from Metz to Jaumont; the first takes you to Briey, going through the villages of Plappeville, Waippz, and Lorry. The second, passing through the village of Armanvillers, follows the road to Doncourt, Etain, and Verdun.

To the south-east of Jaumont the ground is very un-

dulating ; and between Armanvillers and Lorry there is a forest intersected with deep ravines. On the north of Armanvillers lie the roads to Sainte-Marie-aux-Chênes, the heights of Saint-Privat, and the mountains commanding the valley of Montraux ; on the north-east, in the direction of Briey, is situated the beautiful forest of Avril, bordered by the river Orne. On the right of this river are built the villages of Gouf and Hemencourt ; lastly, much farther to the north, at the confluence of the Orne and the Moselle, may be perceived the forest of Mozeuvre and the Sierck road.

It was through this forest of Mozeuvre that the corps of General von Steinmetz, which had taken part in the battle of the 16th, now made its way against the enemy. Thus it was the Prussians of von Steinmetz, who commenced the battle of the 18th, and the army of Prince Frederick Charles formed their line much more to the south, at Doncourt and Mars-la-Tour.

The struggle was still more terrible than that at Gravelotte. The field of battle was of much greater extent, thickly wooded, and intersected in every direction by rivulets ; it embraced almost the whole of the area comprised between Mars-la-Tour and Briey, in a north-west direction.

The battle lasted the whole of the day. At various conjunctures during this terrible struggle victory seemed to be in favour of the French arms ; but unfortunately the French regiments were crushed by superior forces ; and when night came Bazaine's magnificent army, on which the Emperor had based his best-grounded hopes, was driven back to Metz, but not without having fought a battle which the Prussians will long recollect as a victory purchased at the cost of the very greatest sacrifices. After nine hours of heroic struggle against forces so superior that it had to fight with the odds of one against three, the Army of the Rhine found itself cut off decisively

from all its communications, and its retreat to Châlons rendered impossible.

The affair at the quarries of Jaumont, which has been so highly exaggerated by the French newspapers, has, however, a certain foundation of truth. In the midst of this battle of giants, Marshal Canrobert charged like a mere general at the head of two divisions. A hand-to-hand conflict took place between his heroic soldiers and the Prussians. Ultimately, overwhelmed by the fearful fire of the mitrailleuses, the latter were repulsed, and some hundreds of them were driven into the quarries of Jaumont, into which they were precipitated in a bruised and mutilated condition. This feat of arms on the part of Marshal Canrobert is considered as one of the most brilliant among the splendid deeds of the campaign.

On the Friday morning and the days following the field of battle presented a hideous spectacle. In every direction corpses might be seen piled up in heaps, and at some points the mounds of dead reached a height of six feet. Here and there bodies might be found closely intertwined. Farther on some judgment might be formed as to the murderous work of the mitrailleuses which I saw at work for the first time at Forbach ; in one ravine the corpses were so closely crowded one against the other that they had not fallen down ; the bodies of these unfortunate victims were kept upright by being propped up against the rising ground.

The Prussians bivouacked on the field of battle, and in picking up the dead they found an average of only three French in every seven corpses, which proves that, as in the preceding conflicts, the loss on the side of the Prussians was much the most considerable. The latter, however, admit this fact in their reports.

The following episode in the battle of Mars-la-Tour is an evident proof of the various successes gained by the

French during the conflict, and shows how near they were to carrying off the victory.

Towards the evening, after several successive attacks of the French corps at Doncourt, the left wing of the Prussian infantry, exhausted by fatigue and cruelly decimated, commenced to fall back and to yield more and more.

Night was approaching, and the success of the day depended upon the success attained at this point of the field of battle. General von Moltke was anxiously counting the hours which still separated him from complete darkness. The fear of seeing his combinations upset by the heroic resistance of the French increased at every moment, and his restless eye kept on examining the south-east, whence he expected the Pomeranians of the 2nd army-corps. At last, just at the favourable moment, the Pomeranians arrived at quick-step. When they recognized von Moltke, they raised prolonged hurrahs, the echo of which reached as far as the columns, whose ardour was getting weaker and weaker. At the sight of their great general, the soldiers, full of enthusiasm, recovered fresh vigour; they threw themselves upon the heights and upon the positions occupied by the French, and ultimately achieved the victory by an almost supernatural effort, to which they had been inspired by the presence of the chief of the Prussian staff.

Von Moltke immediately rode off at full speed to join the King: "Sire," he cried, "the victory is ours; the enemy is in full retreat."

Both the armies were exhausted; the dead were stretched out in a sticky mud, the wounded were lying in their blood, and thousands of them perished from want of assistance. Night soon came on and veiled with its darkness the aspect of the battle-field and the spectacle of the horrible carnage.

No official report had yet been given as to the battles

of Gravelotte and Mars-la-Tour. Events followed one another with such rapidity that all the interest of details disappeared before the magnitude of the results. At least 40,000 French and 65,000 Prussians were put *hors de combat* in the battles of Borny, Gravelotte, and Mars-la-Tour.

The most important fact, which was for so long a time concealed from the French people, was that, in consequence of these three battles, Bazaine, with the Army of the Rhine, the flower of the French troops and of the staff-officers of France, found himself cut off from any communication with Paris and paralyzed in all his future movements. Most certainly, the success obtained by the Prussians in this strategical combination was the point that decided the issue of the campaign and brought on the catastrophe of Sedan, and in the train of the latter, all the great reverses of France.



## CHAPTER IV.

THE ARMY OF MARSHAL BAZAINE THROWN BACK UPON METZ—  
INCIDENTS—CAMP OF MOURMELON—MACMAHON'S ARMY MARCHES  
ON THE ARDENNES—MONTMÉDY.

AFTER witnessing these principal events, so disastrous and yet so glorious to the French arms, I followed up my road to Verdun, outside the Prussian lines. The Etain and Verdun roads bore traces of the conflicts which had taken place in the vicinity. Detachments of Uhlans were exploring the main lines of communication, and the two regiments of Chasseurs d'Afrique, after having escorted the Emperor on his road to the camp at Châlons, were returning and giving chase to the Prussian scouts. They did not re-

turn, but formed a portion of Mac-  
Mahon's army. At the village of Jarny, a squadron of the 2nd Chasseurs d'Afrique, commanded by Colonel de Galiffet, came in conflict with 150 Uhlans. After discharging their fire-arms they attacked one another sword in hand, and it was not long before the Uhlans fled in disorder over the country, closely pursued by the chasseurs charging vigorously at full gallop. This pursuit, which lasted some time, was unquestionably one of the most interesting spectacles that I witnessed during the whole course of the campaign. The result of this warlike steeple-chase was the capture of thirty Uhlans and the death of six others.

An hour later, in a village near Etain, our march was checked by five Uhlans posted in the middle of the road. My companions and I made up our minds to

resist any attempt at plunder on the part of these gentlemen. The inhabitants had all disappeared, the doors were closed, and there was not a single living being to be seen except the majestic German troopers, sitting motionless on their horses, and holding a revolver in one hand and in the other their long lance, surmounted with a pennon ornamented with the Prussian eagle. There was no possibility of mistaking their intentions. They were waiting for us who were mere private individuals, with the conviction perhaps that we were the bearers of the imperial strong-box or of important despatches at the very least.

To be ready for any emergency and being much excited by the scenes of carnage we had witnessed during the last three days, we had already grasped our revolvers, resolved to take strong measures against these untoward adversaries, when a detachment of twenty-five Chasseurs d'Afrique, darting at full gallop out of the adjoining woods, put the Uhlans to flight and set us free from their unpleasant propinquity.

The inhabitants of the village, who were mad with terror, then opened their windows. The sight of the Chasseurs d'Afrique seemed to awaken in them a feeling of bravery which they ought to have shown earlier. The mayor, after having carefully made sure of the retreat of the Uhlans, declared that he was going to fetch his gun, and that he had always been ready to die in order to defend the lives of those under his jurisdiction. Unfortunately, his deputy did away with all the effect of this warlike harangue by declaring that the worthy magistrate had awaited the attack of the enemy under the deep vaulted arches of his cellar.

Wine and provisions were brought to celebrate the retreat of the enemy and the imaginary bravery of the good villagers. Toasts were drunk to the glory of France; but the poor peasants, so joyous just at this moment, had no idea that a few hours afterwards their

houses would be occupied by the enemy, and their provisions carried off as a requisition.

After a short stay at Verdun and Montmédy, having ascertained that the communications between the latter town and Rheims were not interrupted, I formed the resolution of setting out for Rheims and proceeding thence to Châlons, to the head-quarters of Marshal MacMahon.

Notwithstanding the contradictory reports of another battle fought by Bazaine since the 18th, and of a favourable retreat made by him through the Prussian lines, I had not altered my opinion. I was deeply convinced that the Marshal's army was hemmed in at Metz, and had not the slightest chance of breaking through the circle of fire which surrounded it.

An excursion to Longuyon, made in company with my friend de Katow, had afforded me a proof of the immense extension of the Prussian lines.

From Longuyon, we pushed on as far as the village of Benveille, near Pierrepont, following a very winding and thickly wooded road. The village had been abandoned, and from the summit of a hill we could distinctly see the Uhlans making their way towards the line of railway, close to which several groups of men were at work. I subsequently learnt that they were Prussians who were pulling up the rails, so that the last line that enabled the army of Metz to forward their wounded to Thionville, was thus cut.

We returned as quickly as we could to Montmédy, where we arrived in the evening, time enough to take the train to Rheims; thence, we left for Mourmelon, five leagues from Châlons, where the quarters of the Emperor and of Marshal MacMahon were situated.

The camp was occupied by an army of  
 100,000. about 130,000 men. The *garde-mobile* had left for Saint-Maur, and the army-corps of Mar-

shal MacMahon was composed of soldiers of every branch in the service. It was said, that that very night some great strategical movement was to take place, looking forward to a battle. It was added, that the Emperor and the whole army-corps were about to leave the camp, and lastly, that everything was ready for meeting the enemy, and dealing the heavy blow which had been meditated for some days. Hundreds of vehicles and requisition-waggons, with which I was so well acquainted in my accidental journey on the preceding Monday, were either loading or waiting around this vast camp. The spectacle reminded me of that famous Sunday when, intending to leave Metz that day, we became witnesses of the great battles fought under its walls.

The army under the command of MacMahon was then composed of the remains of the 1st corps, brought by the Marshal from Woerth and Saverne ; of the corps of de Failly, who had rallied MacMahon after his retreat from Saverne ; of the 7th corps of General Felix Douay, arrived from Belfort by railway by way of Paris ; of three divisions of the 6th corps left at the camp of Mourmelon by Marshal Canrobert ; of 10,000 men of the marine infantry, and a new corps of young soldiers under the command of General Lebrun ; the whole forming a total of 130,000 men.

This new army had been assembled in a very short space of time ; nevertheless its equipment and its war *matériel* were complete. It is right to say that the energy and presence of the Emperor had contributed a great deal towards this. Another new army-corps was likewise in course of construction at Paris under the orders of General Vinoy, who was preparing to join MacMahon.

The Prussians were at Commercy, and the advanced-guard of the Crown Prince, already arrived at Vitry, was advancing in the direction of Châlons-sur-Marne.



It was to be presumed that, in these very plains which once witnessed the defeat of the hordes of Attila, a battle would take place between the army of the Crown Prince and the forces commanded by MacMahon. But the strategy of the French Minister of War, which was to be so fatal to our arms, had decided otherwise. MacMahon received orders to leave the camp of Mourmelon and to march to the relief of Bazaine. On Sunday, the 21st of August, the camp was broken up; the tents of the encampments still existed, but the graceful ornaments, the triumphal arches, the monuments erected by the soldiers were destroyed. The immense town of canvas, which was so populous and animated the night before, was completely deserted. It assumed the desolate appearance of a vast cemetery. The wooden barracks, with their open doors, the imperial quarters, the villas of the generals, and the magazines, all were abandoned.

In the village of Mourmelon the restaurants, the *cafés*, and the various shops, which the night before were crowded with guests and customers, were sadly closed. All the disposable vehicles had been taken possession of, and the few people that remained were preparing for their departure; 200 infantry soldiers and about two squadrons of cuirassiers, forming the extreme rear-guard, were only waiting for the order to march.

I set out for Rheims, and when I had arrived at a point four miles from Grand-Mourmelon, on the summit of a hill from which the eye embraces the whole plain of Châlons, I perceived great fires burning simultaneously at six different points of the camp. The tents were soon in flames, as well as the adjoining woods surrounding them, and the splendid field for manœuvres, which had been for so long a period the pride of the staff, was sacrificed at the approach of the enemy, and very soon was nothing but a heap of ruins.



The road was obstructed by more than 3000 baggage-waggon, and also by other vehicles making their way to Rheims. We were compelled to cross the fields in order to pass the night at the village of Prunay.

We were seated quietly in a room of the principal inn, doing justice to the slender provisions which we had been fortunate enough to find at so advanced an hour of the night, in a country, too, where the sudden transit of so large a number of troops had almost exhausted the supply of victuals, when a dozen countrymen, making their way into the apartment, came to disturb our peace. The new comers were armed with cudgels, and the sole aim of their visit was to inflict on us a good thrashing, previously to taking us prisoners as Prussian spies. Katow and I, having been before in similar circumstances, were perfectly well acquainted with the means of quieting the sudden heroism of these worthy peasants.

Immediately drawing our revolvers, we explained to them that if two of their party, after having examined our papers, did not give their companions a satisfactory account as to our identity as Frenchmen, we were ready to defend our rights and our persons. The crowd retired, and two of their chief men, after handling our passports, without honouring them even with a glance, declared that we were their worthy fellow-countrymen. In a few minutes afterward the thin wine of the district was binding together the ties of friendship; and if we had laid the least stress upon it, they would have at once conferred upon us the title of citizens of Prunay.

Early the next morning ■■■ arrived at Rheims. The Emperor had stopped at the *château* of Madame Sennard, and the Marshal was encamped in the town. It was whispered that MacMahon's army was on the point of making a strategical movement which would infallibly lead on to decisive results.

The marshal  
was lodged in  
the adjacent  
house.

The greatest confidence prevailed among the population; but, owing to information which I had received from one of the best-informed persons in the town, I was very far from sharing in the hopes of the public. It was evident that Bazaine's retreat to Verdun was cut off, and that his movements were paralyzed; also that the Crown Prince, instead of marching on Paris, was now pursuing MacMahon's army, with the aim of opposing the attempts of the latter to extricate the Army of the Rhine from its perilous position.

Being perfectly convinced that MacMahon's army would march on Metz, I immediately retraced my steps in the direction of Montmédy, hoping very soon to be the witness of some important events.

I reached Montmédy on the 26th of August, and was astonished at the unusual commotion by which the little town was animated. I was likewise surprised by the presence there of M. Wolf, the commissary-general of the army, and of Baron Larrey, the head military surgeon; also by the immense quantity of provisions accumulated in the place.

Although Montmédy is the seat of one of the sub-prefectures of La Meuse, the town does not contain a population of more than 3000 inhabitants. It is situated on the extreme verge of the department of La Meuse, on the confines of Luxembourg, and about three miles from the Belgian territory. The town is divided in two parts, the upper town, enclosed within the walls of the fortress, and the lower town, lying at the foot of the fortified rocks.

The citadel, owing to its position on the summit of a high rock, is certainly as strong as any frontier town whatever of the second class. The fortifications are excellent, and the natural rocks on which they are built enable all the surrounding country to be most effectively defended.

The citadel was well armed, and the artillery was served by the *gardes mobiles*. A superior officer commanded the place, and battalions of mobiles, well-drilled by sub-officers of the army, performed the duties of the garrison.

At this juncture, the strategical importance of Montmédy was derived from its line of railway towards the Ardennes, the Prussians having cut the lines in the direction of Thionville. The line from Montmédy to Sedan and the Ardennes was therefore the only one left for the transport of the provisions intended for the French.

The chief commissariat officers and the surgeons-major of the army had arrived at Montmédy. All the vehicles and carts had been put in requisition. Various stores had been collected there, and an order from the mayor had just directed the preparation of a certain number of beds for the wounded, and had also called upon the inhabitants to have broth ready. A fight was expected in the vicinity, but the troops were not yet in sight. All sorts of reports were circulated; it was said that one of MacMahon's army-corps was approaching in the direction of Stenay, and that another corps was arriving from the opposite side.

The greatest excitement prevailed at every point; whole families left their homes and proceeded towards Belgium; and the inhabitants that remained looked with suspicious eyes at all those who entered the town. Every instant you might hear the exclamation, "That must be a spy." Then you were perhaps surrounded, your papers examined, or you were handed over to the custody of gendarmes and douaniers.

In the midst of this popular agitation I saw a little priest led by two gendarmes, surrounded by *gardes mobiles*, and followed by a crowd of common people. The little curé was crying out and gesticulating in the midst of those who were leading him away.

This priest, who was performing clerical duty at a village ■ mile or two away, was discussing at the railway station about the war, and ended his talk by saying, "Ah, you have not done with the Prussians yet ; it is only the beginning at present, and God has sent them to punish the French for their sins." But this was quite sufficient ; cries of "Down with the Prussians !" were soon heard, and the little curé was carried off by the populace and consigned to the custody of the gendarmes, who might certainly arrest his person, but it is very doubtful if they could succeed in stopping his tongue.

In the evening the commandant of the place received a telegram announcing that MacMahon was marching on Stenay, and, although the great combination was kept secret, no one doubted that Montmédy must be the point of junction of the two French armies.

During this time the Uhlans were continuing their daring excursions from Longwy and Longuyon. At Lamouilly and Chauvancy, on the Sedan line, they had cut the rails ; an engagement had taken place, and they had been repulsed with considerable loss.

Mézières, Sedan, and Montmédy had suddenly acquired a vital importance in the French operations, and it was absolutely necessary to maintain this line of railway intact, so as to assist the Marshal's strategical movements and secure the arrival of his trains of stores and reinforcements.

The Prussians were in great force at Vouziers, Grand-Pré, and Dom-sur-Meuse, and a column was marching on Rethel, so that a collision between the two armies was now imminent.

On the 28th of August, there was heard at Montmédy the sound of ■ cannonade in the direction of Chauvancy, and also a little more to the west, on the side of the village of Buzancy.

I left on horseback for Chauvancy, a place about four



miles distant, and, following the line of railway, I reached about ten o'clock a small farm situated on a rising ground, whence I witnessed an engagement of outposts.

A body of forty-eight men of the 6th regiment of the line had been detached from Sedan to guard the Chauvancy line of railway; the night before the Uhlans had cut the line, but after an hour's conflict had been repulsed. The communication had been re-established, the few wounded sent to Montmédy, and the new detachment had carefully intrenched itself.

At nine o'clock on the 28th, 200 men of the Prussian engineers and 400 Uhlans suddenly emerged from a wood situate to the west of Chauvancy, and, without firing a shot, attacked the French detachment of the 6th regiment of the line. The French, commanded by a captain, sustained bravely the first shock of the attack; they spread out into skirmishing order, and, at ten o'clock, when I arrived in sight of the conflict, still remained masters of the station, which they were defending in the mode adopted by the Algerian sharpshooters. Twenty different attacks, one after the other, took place in my presence, and great was my surprise at seeing this handful of soldiers, although surrounded on almost every side, still maintaining their fire and sheltering themselves behind hedges, trees, and every obstacle which the surface of the ground afforded them; but they were forced to succumb to numbers. At about eleven o'clock they were dislodged from the station, and about an hour afterwards I could see the Prussian infantry engaged in destroying the line, whilst the Uhlans were guarding the place.

Nine French soldiers were killed and six wounded; they passed near me on their way to Montmédy, lying in a large cart full of straw. Eighteen men, including the captain, had been made prisoners. The Prussians had twenty-three men *hors de combat*.



Almost at the same moment, an outpost engagement was being fought at Buzancy. And now the vast struggles, which commenced with the engagement at Beaumont and ended with the catastrophe of Sedan, were about to be developed and to astonish the world with their unparalleled results and the immensity of the disasters falling on the French army.

## CHAPTER V.

ENGAGEMENTS AT BEAUMONT, MOUZON, AND DOUZY—BATTLE OF SEDAN—THE EMPEROR UNDER FIRE—THE COIRASSIERS AND THE CHASSEURS D'AFRIQUE.

ON leaving Chauvancy I bent my course towards the Belgian frontier, and after a night's rest I continued my journey, guided by nothing but the sound of the cannonade. I took care to go through the neutral territory, so as to avoid the Prussian scouts who were beating up the country. I thus reached Florenville, and thence proceeded to Carignan, where I arrived rather late in the evening.

Carignan is a small town situate on the railway line from Sedan to Montmédy, about twelve miles from Chauvancy, although more than double that distance by the road along which I had been compelled to ride.

The greatest part of MacMahon's army had arrived in the evening and encamped at Vaux, a little village a mile and three-quarters from the town; these troops came from Mouzon and Moulins. The Emperor had been at Carignan since morning, and several aides-de-camp and officers of the imperial household were actively engaged in making all the necessary preparations for the stay of his Majesty.

Carignan was not occupied by the 1st corps until the evening of the 30th, about 6 o'clock.

I found at Vaux some of the acquaintances I had previously made at Metz, but I did not meet with a single officer belonging to the head-quarters of the Army of the Rhine. When I asked for information about them, the answer invariably was that, since the 18th, there had

been no news from the army. I had arrived at a favourable moment, for the gigantic struggle which was about to decide the fate of the whole French army had commenced the evening before, at Beaumont, between the 5th army-corps, commanded by General de Failly, and the 4th and 12th Saxon corps.

On Monday, the 29th of August, General de Failly, who commanded the advanced guard of MacMahon's army, had halted near Beaumont, in order to rest his troops and allow them time to take some food. The weather was magnificent, and whilst waiting for the time for marching the general gave orders to clean the chassepôts, and to pay attention to numerous little details which had been necessarily neglected during the forced march which the troops had made from Rheims to Beaumont.

With inexcusable carelessness, General de Failly had neglected to take the precautions dictated by the commonest prudence and especially indispensable to an army during war. Not a single vedette was posted round the camp, and not a single scout was sent to reconnoitre in the environs.

The Prussians, constantly so well informed both of the movements and positions of their enemies, lost no time in profiting only too much by this unpardonable fault, which was the chief cause of MacMahon's disasters. Protected by the woods, which concealed their march, a corps of 60,000 Saxons surprised General de Failly's army-corps, and by a rapid movement fell upon the French soldiers, who were then completely disarmed. The soldiers of a whole brigade were made prisoners before they knew where they were. Only one battery of artillery was able to get into position, and, notwithstanding all the disadvantage of this precipitate defence, the fight was well sustained by those who had had the chance of getting hold of their arms. The engagement

lasted several hours amidst a horrible carnage ; but ultimately the French were crushed by numbers and driven back as far as Mouzon, beyond the Meuse, leaving in the hands of the enemy twelve pieces of cannon, six mitrailleuses, and several thousand prisoners.

The following day, at ten o'clock in the morning, the Saxons, reinforced by the 1st Bavarian corps and the advanced guard of the Crown Prince of Prussia, recommenced the attack at Mouzon against the remains of General de Failly's corps, to which had been added some strong detachments of the army-corps encamped at Vaux.

The country round Carignan is excessively steep and mountainous. An immense plateau, on which is situated the farm of Labahiville, commands the camp and the surrounding meadows at the distance of about three miles.

I visited the camp at Vaux, where several of the divisions which I had seen at Rheims and Châlons were assembled, and not perceiving Marshal MacMahon, I hastened to seek information, when I was suddenly interrupted by the sound of a heavy cannonade proceeding from Mouzon. I immediately bent my way towards the highest point of the plateau on which stands the farm of Labahiville, where also the Emperor and his staff had been since the morning. The cannonade went on increasing, and amidst the smoke and fire of the artillery I distinctly perceived considerable masses of troops executing various strategical movements.

The French occupied a strong position to the left of Carignan. At four o'clock the engagement became more serious ; at this moment, MacMahon, with the greatest part of his troops, arrived on the field of battle, but in spite of the most valiant exertions the Prussians gained ground, and in the evening the French army was in full retreat upon Sedan.

The struggle that took place on this day was a desperate one ; on both sides they fought with terrible obstinacy in the midst of most frightful carnage. The 5th French corps which, under the command of General de Failly, had endured the shock of the first attack, suffered considerably ; some of its regiments were almost entirely annihilated ; added to this, the villages of Beaulay and Mouzon were in flames.

During the whole of the afternoon, every one at Carignan cherished the hope that some important success would crown the efforts of the French arms. This reliance was supported by the presence of MacMahon's magnificent army, the arrival of the Emperor, the care which the officers of the imperial household had taken as to the lodging of his Majesty, and the encamping of the troops at Vaux. Thus, in spite of the proximity of the field of battle, the inhabitants did not experience any anxiety, so sure did victory appear to them.

But at seven o'clock in the evening, when the Emperor, who was to have passed the night at Carignan, suddenly quitted the town, when his couriers and the people of his household were seen precipitately following him, and when the cannonade was heard approaching closer and closer, a universal panic seized the inhabitants and spread with the rapidity of lightning. Masses of disbanded soldiers entered the town, and the inhabitants took to flight in every direction. The picture of the retreat of Longeville immediately presented itself to my mind.

What a night it was at Carignan ! At daybreak I proceeded in the direction of Sedan, and before the morning was over, I had rejoined the French army which was in full retreat pursued by the Prussian columns.

It would be impossible for me to estimate exactly the losses sustained in this engagement ; all that I can vouch for is that they were enormous on both sides. The



French cavalry, both cuirassiers and chasseurs, suffered considerably, and several mitrailleuses were left in possession of the enemy.

The next day, at nine o'clock, the Prussians entered Carignan and took possession of the town. The first thing they did was to destroy the railway and burn the station. It is impossible to depict the scenes of desolation which everywhere met the eye; the affrighted inhabitants fled precipitately towards the Belgian frontier, and all the roads were obstructed by long files of waggons loaded with women, children, and household furniture and utensils.

How is it possible for me to describe the numberless acts of bravery which took place during these three days of fighting, which were the prelude to the battle of Sedan? How is it possible for me to relate the heroic defence made by this noble French army against an enemy three times its superior in numbers, the charges of its brave cavalry, the bayonet attacks of the zouaves and Turcos, their thousand glorious exploits, and finally, the unaccountable capitulation of 80,000 men who would have preferred to die, if they had been consulted, rather than tarnish the glory of those standards rendered illustrious by their fathers.

On the 30th, MacMahon, who was retreating on Sedan, closely pursued by the enemy, was attacked just as he was crossing the plateau of Douzy. During the greater part of the afternoon and up to nine o'clock in the evening, a formidable engagement was carried on; the battle-field was nearly four miles in extent, and lay between Douzy, Armigny and Bréville, midway between Carignan and Sedan. At the beginning of the contest the French had the advantage; they had even succeeded ? ? in taking possession of the heights whence, only an hour before, the Prussian artillery made such frightful ravages in their ranks. From the top of a hill, two miles from the

field of battle; I could distinctly follow the manœuvres of the two armies and the changes in their positions. By a rapid movement, the Prussians, whose numbers had been considerably increased since the day before, had turned the left flank of the French and were trying to drive them back towards the Belgian frontier; but before long, amidst the dust raised by the cavalry charges, and the smoke from the cannon, the columns of soldiers were lost to my view, and it became impossible for me to estimate exactly the position of the combatants.

At night-fall when I set out for the village of Messincourt, where I slept, the result of the day's fight was still undecided; the French had preserved the positions they had occupied in the morning; but the aim of the Prussians had been attained. They had stopped the retreat of the French army to Sedan and Mézières, and with the help of the reinforcements they had received and of those which they were still awaiting, they were satisfied of being able to carry out the whole programme of that sanguinary drama, the prologue to which they had just been playing—a drama which was to end so fatally for the French arms.

I crossed the field of battle, but I did not stop to estimate the number of victims. They were numerous, and it would have needed a heart of stone to stop and make these sad calculations; ever since the morning I had been obliged to muster up all my coolness in order to witness unmoved these scenes of carnage. But then I was sustained by excessive excitement, the smell of gunpowder, and that unaccountable fascination which danger exercises over us and by which we feel ourselves involuntarily attracted.

Since Monday the corpses had been lying unburied, and many of the wounded, who had been abandoned, had died for want of assistance. The ambulance-service had not yet been organized on the battle-field, and in the

midst of these villages, deserted by the inhabitants and devastated by the armies, no one remained to succour these unfortunate men. Hundreds of wounded perished for want of help, when a charitable hand might have saved their lives.

The 1st of September will be a fatal day in the history of France; it will also figure in the annals of war as the anniversary of one of the most sanguinary battles that have ever been fought. From the dawn of day, I followed all the movements of the troops, and up to two o'clock a rapid and continuous cannonade never ceased to resound. A furious conflict was engaged in on both sides, and from the position I occupied I could distinguish nearly all the manœuvres of the combatants. Fresh army-corps arrived in succession round the hills, columns advanced and retired, and batteries of artillery took up new positions or disappeared in the midst of the confusion. I endeavoured to estimate the number of troops engaged, and I may safely assert that there were not less than 300,000 Germans against 120,000 French.

The field of battle extended over nearly four miles, from Carignan to Sedan, in a north-westerly direction; it comprised a large part of the country situated right and left of the Meuse and Chiers, and included the villages of Balan, Waldencourt, Bazeilles, Nouilly, Douzy, and Brévilley; the village of Télaigne formed the extreme point to the south-east, and Sedan the corresponding one to the north-west; while the centre was at Douzy, at the junction of the Meuse and Chiers, on a plain three miles wide, and situated five miles from the Belgian frontier.

About two o'clock in the morning the cannonade was heard, and the attack commenced immediately; at four o'clock the whole French army had advanced from Sedan. From this moment all the artillery was in action, and the battle raged with unprecedented violence. Up to

half-past eleven the French kept the advantage; they were visibly gaining ground; and the retreat of the Prussian columns and their batteries of artillery was perfectly perceptible. At a quarter to twelve, the principal army-corps stayed their hand; but after a rest of twenty minutes the struggle began again along the whole line with redoubled fury.

The two armies then occupied the following positions:—

The French army, the right wing of which was supported by the citadel of Sedan, had its back to the Belgian frontier, and occupied the villages of Balan, Bazeilles, and Douzy, as far as the sugar-refinery which stands at the end of the last-mentioned village. The Prussian army occupied the villages of Têlaigne (on one side of Carignan), Brévilley, Nouilly, and Waldencourt; the staff was at Nouilly, and the confluence of the Meuse and Chiers formed nearly the centre of its operations.

The Germans were led by the Princes of Saxony and Prussia, under the command-in-chief of the King and General von Moltke.

Fate seemed inveterate against the French armies; since the morning they had been deprived of the services of their commander-in-chief. Marshal MacMahon, very seriously wounded, had been conveyed off the field of battle, and replaced in his command by General de Wimpffen, who had quite recently arrived from Africa, but was unknown to the greatest part of the army. The result of this was a want of confidence on the part of the troops, to which I shall have occasion to refer again in the course of my narrative.

At noon the arrival of German reinforcements gave a new aspect to the battle-field, and rendered the position of the French divisions desperate.

The reserve of the Prince of Prussia's army advanced under fire; it was composed of a complete army-corps



of fresh troops, who came just in time to decide the victory. This circumstance may be compared to the arrival of Blücher, and, as at Waterloo, the results were to be the same for the fortune of the Napoleons. From my point of observation I could distinguish the different regiments forming this new corps. The weather was magnificent, and a brilliant sun threw its rays on the uniforms of the soldiers, who were taking up their position on the right wing of the French. The infantry, cavalry, and artillery, advanced as if on parade; the cannon thundered from the heights of Francheval, and shells and bullets fell like hail on the village of Bazeilles, which was situated between two fires.

Bazeilles was soon in flames; an indescribable fury had seized the inhabitants who had remained in the village; barricades were formed in the streets; and for a moment the villagers opposed a most heroic resistance to the enemy, and stopped the march of a whole division of Bavarians. But this success was of short duration; the Germans, intoxicated by carnage, set fire to the houses which were still standing; they then surrounded the village, and caused all the inhabitants to perish in the flames. Nothing is now left of Bazeilles but ruins, which stand there to bear witness to the results of those days of bloodshed.

It was then two o'clock in the afternoon; and, in consequence of various strategical movements, the position of the troops had undergone some important changes. General Lebrun's corps, forming the left wing, and engaged the whole day at Bazeilles, on the road from Carignan to Mézières, had been nearly routed and thrown back on Balan and the bridge of Torcy.

The centre, composed of the 1st corps under General Ducrot, and the 5th corps, which had been commanded by General Wimpffen until he became commander-in-chief, and was now under the leadership of the brave



General Guyot de Lesparre, had abandoned the heights of Daigny, but was still fighting between Moncelle and Givonne.

On the left wing the 7th corps, commanded by General Félix Douay, was defending, inch by inch, its positions from Floing to Illy.

The Bavarians, commanded by General von der Tann, occupied Douzy and Bazeilles, supported from the heights of these villages by a powerful artillery, and by the Saxons under the Crown Prince of Saxony. The royal guard, supported by the 5th and 11th Prussian corps, was engaged all along the line, and chiefly against General Ducrot's troops at Givonne.

The Wurtembergers were arriving from Donchéry. The King and Prince of Prussia had remained during the whole battle on the heights on the left bank of the Meuse. From the top of these hills they watched attentively the execution of General von Moltke's plan, the aim of which was to hem in the French round Sedan, and to prevent any attempt to retreat on Mézières.

The battle was then raging in all its fury, and both sides fought heroically. On taking the chief command, General de Wimpffen, judging that it was impossible to effect the retreat on Mézières in broad daylight with an army already exhausted by previous battles and forced marches, had abandoned this latter part of MacMahon's plan, thus completing the ruin of our army.

At three o'clock the troops of the 7th corps, posted near the wood of Garenne and the farm of the same name, were being exposed to a murderous fire; the Prussian shells decimated their ranks, and their position was untenable. Three separate times General Douay endeavoured to set his batteries in position to answer the Prussian artillery, but each time they were dismounted in less than ten minutes. A retreat on the right of Illy also became impossible in consequence of the superior

forces of the Prussians, who continued their turning movement under cover of ten batteries of artillery established on the plateau.

For an instant the 12th corps was more fortunate on the left wing. The two divisions of marine-infantry, commanded by General Martin des Pallières, accomplished prodigies of valour. General de Wimpffen sent some reinforcements to the 12th corps, for he thought that by means of a vigorous attack he might relieve the right wing, throw the enemy back on the Meuse, and open a road towards Carignan and Montmédy.

This movement was executed with lightning-like rapidity by General des Pallières, who, at the head of his marine-infantry, overthrew the foremost columns of the enemy. Unfortunately, this movement was not supported by the 1st and 7th corps, who had just retreated under the protection of the cannon of Sedan, and General Lebrun found it impossible to co-operate in a manœuvre which might have saved the greater part of the French army.

The Germans continued to advance, doubling round both wings of the French army. They were already at Givonne and La Chapelle, and several of their columns had even reached Balan and Torcy. The centre of the French army, driven back upon Sedan, made sortie after sortie under the protection of the guns of the fortress; but General de Wimpffen had lost the last chance of executing a retreat with his army.

In the midst of this conflict, a regiment of Prussian dragoons was completely destroyed by a battery of mitrailleuses, at the very moment when a French brigade was crushed by the German artillery.

The French cavalry took a glorious part in the battle. For several hours, a division composed of the 1st and 2nd regiments of cuirassiers, and the 2nd and 3rd regiments of Chasseurs d'Afrique, commanded by General

Margueritte, had been stationed and left under the fire of Prussian artillery. Exasperated at its own inaction, this division had several times attempted to charge the enemy, notwithstanding the order of its chiefs. General Margueritte, taking upon himself all the responsibility, and preferring the probability of death in the *mêlée* to a useless state of inaction, suddenly gave the order to charge "at full gallop." This order was instantly repeated by all the commanders of corps, and immediately Commandant d'Alincourt with the 1st cuirassiers, and Colonel de Gallifet with the 2nd chasseurs, led their terrible columns to a certain death, as they rushed like a torrent on the German legions. Like the famous charge at Balaclava, it was a daring but a dangerous movement. A perfect hail of shells and bullets, and a wall of bayonets, were opposed to the terrific shock of this attack. The artillery and infantry were mingled in confusion among the horses, and prostrate men were trodden under foot. A regiment of Germans threw down their arms at the approach of this hurricane, and asked to surrender; but the heroes of this sublime charge had not time to stop. They forced their way into the midst of the Prussian columns with unexampled rashness, and succeeded in reaching a ravine where, under the fire of the hostile artillery, they met a glorious death.

General Margueritte was severely wounded by a splinter of a shell, and died a few hours afterwards. The valiant officers, after accomplishing a glorious and chivalrous action worthy of past times, fell bravely in the midst of their soldiers. Colonel Galiffet and a hundred men of his magnificent regiment, were the only ones who succeeded in cutting a passage through the Prussian lines.

At four o'clock the army was completely beaten, and driven back to Sedan. The defeat was complete. The Emperor had been since the morning in the thick of the

fire, encouraging the troops by his example, and braving every peril. After having proceeded to the village of Balan, mounted the hills of La Moncelle, and crossed the ravine of Givonne, in the midst of the continual explosion of projectiles, Napoleon III. marched at the head of a column of attack. For several hours he was exposed to the very greatest danger, and, in my capacity of eyewitness, I am able to guarantee the authenticity of the facts. A hail of shot and shell fell around the Emperor, who gloriously maintained the reputation for bravery that he had gained in the earlier years of his life.

At the entreaty of his staff, and failing to find the glorious death which he sought, the Emperor retired into the fortress to hold a conference with Marshal MacMahon; but the stores of ammunition began to fail, and the position became more and more desperate.

Then there commenced a complete rout across the forest of the Ardennes, and the woods which bordered the Belgian territory. General de Sartinnes' brigade, fighting up to the last, had been entirely cut off from its army-corps, and was captured after suffering considerable loss.

It was a moment of indescribable confusion. Officers of all ranks—generals, colonels, and captains—were hemmed in pell-mell with the soldiers, and the Prussian batteries of artillery, pointed on these compact masses, continued their work of destruction.

The left wing of the French army, cut off from its centre and mowed down by the fire of the Prussian artillery, dispersed in every direction, and quitting their ranks threw themselves in confusion into the forests. Detachments of Prussian cavalry were sent in pursuit of them, and the number of killed, wounded, and prisoners in this last affair was immense. Many thousands of men were destroyed during these two hours, and more than 8000 prisoners fell into the hands of the enemy.



The loss of the Prussians amounted to 18,000 men killed or wounded. At half-past five the noise of the cannonade had ceased, and the white flag was floating over the citadel of Sedan. The great day of humiliation for France was approaching. But before entering upon the account of that important event, which will be remarkable as one of the greatest catastrophes in the military history of France, I must say a few words as to the massacre of Bazailles.

Since morning this village had been between the fire of two armies. The first spark which set light to the conflagration may have been directed either by the French artillery, or by the German cannon; but towards evening the Bavarians completed the destruction of the village. Nevertheless, up to the present time, it has not yet been clearly proved that the excesses of which the Germans are accused were committed with a revengeful intent, and that they possessed the character which was attributed to them by certain newspaper correspondents, who did not arrive on the field of battle until five or six days after the action.

My own impression, *de visu*, on the day after the battle of the 1st of September, was that the unfortunate inhabitants had been fatally entangled in the midst of the conflict, too late for them to quit the village and thus escape ■ certain death.

For several hours Bazailles was the central point of the struggle, and the possession of this village being disputed with incredible obstinacy, the poor villagers were buried, together with soldiers of both armies, under the ruins of their own dwellings. There is no doubt that light will some day be thrown on the incidents which then took place; but be that as it may, the destruction of this village and its 2000 inhabitants will always be quoted as a sad instance of the calamities of war.



## CHAPTER VI.

## CAPITULATION OF SEDAN—THE FIELD OF BATTLE—THE PRISONERS OF WAR—ATTACK ON MONTMÉDY.

By ■ curious coincidence it was a Frenchman who announced in England the news of the great disaster of Sedan. Thanks to a combination of fortunate circumstances, and owing also to the arrangements I made, I had been enabled to be present at the battles of the last three days, and even during the actions themselves I was able from time to time to send couriers carrying my letters and telegrams addressed to *The Standard* newspaper.

After passing the night in the forests of the Ardennes, in the midst of disbanded soldiers, I was informed in the morning of the capitulation of Sedan, the surrender of the Emperor and of 80,000 men of MacMahon's army.

The immensity of this catastrophe completely upset all my faculties. For more than an hour I was plunged into a state of complete mental prostration, and was crushed beneath the weight of the disasters of my country. I myself had borne arms, and the recollection of numerous generations of soldiers who had immortalized the French flag in all the countries of the universe presented itself to my mind. I thought on the vast military power which France possessed for so many centuries, a power which had just been annihilated in a moment; I thought on our noble French nation, so renowned for its bravery, the prestige of which had just

Deplorable, but not disgraceful. been suddenly destroyed by this disgraceful capitulation ; and all these thoughts passed through my mind and filled my heart with a profound sadness. But it was an accomplished fact and an irreparable misfortune, and it was necessary to think on the future.

On the evening of the great battle which was to bring about so fatal a result Count Bismarck, in the name of the King of Prussia, entered into negotiations with General Wimpffen and the general staff of MacMahon's army. The aim of these negotiations was to discuss the conditions of the surrender of the army.

General Ducrot and General Wimpffen himself were completely opposed to any capitulation, but the decision of the majority of the French council of war prevailed. They brought forward the want of ammunition and of food, and the uselessness of sacrificing thousands of soldiers in trying to make a way through the German columns, the forces of which were three times as great as those of the French troops.

General von Moltke had declared that the assault would commence at daybreak if the capitulation was not concluded, and, taking as the basis of the latter the disarming of the French troops, he declared that no other condition would be accepted.

At General de Wimpffen's request the meeting was adjourned till the next day, and at six o'clock the Emperor, accompanied by Generals Reille, de Castelnau, de la Moskowa, Pajol, and Waubert de Genlis, proceeded to Vendresse, where the head-quarters of the King of Prussia were situated.

Near Donchéry he met Count Bismarck. Napoleon and the Chancellor of the German Confederation both alighted from their carriages, and entered a small deserted cottage, and there, in a little room on the ground-floor,

the only furniture of which was a table and two chairs, they had an interview which lasted nearly an hour.

The Emperor did all he could to obtain better terms of capitulation for the army ; but Count Bismarck called attention to the fact that this question would form a part of the military arrangements, and that it could not be discussed except by Generals de Wimpffen and von Moltke.

As a prisoner of war the Emperor refused to negotiate as to any question relative to peace. He then left, with the Count and an escort of white cuirassiers, for the Chateau de Bellevue, near Frenois, where an interview with the King of Prussia had been arranged.

During this time General de Wimpffen had arrived at von Moltke's head-quarters ; the conditions of the capitulation, which had been interrupted during the night, were discussed anew, and the following instrument was definitively accepted and signed :—

“*Sedan, September 2nd.*”

“Between the Chief of the Staff of his Majesty King William, Commander-in-Chief of the German armies, and the General, Commander-in-Chief of the French armies, both acting in virtue of the full powers of their Majesties the King of Prussia and the Emperor of the French, the following articles have been concluded :—

“Art. 1.—The French army under the command of General de Wimpffen, at present hemmed in by superior forces round Sedan, are prisoners of war.

“Art. 2.—In consideration of the valorous defence made by this army an exemption is made in favour of all the generals and officers, and of all the superior *employés* taking rank as officers in the ‘*Annuaire Militaire*,’ who are willing to give their parole in writing neither to take up arms against Germany, nor to act in any way against the latter nation down to the end of the present war. The officers and *employés* accepting these condi-

tions may take away the arms and effects which belong to them personally.

"Art. 3.—All the other arms and war-material, consisting of flags, eagles, cannon, horses, warlike stores, military trains, &c., shall be immediately delivered over to the German delegate by a military commission appointed by the commander-in-chief.

"Art. 4.—The town of Sedan shall be given up in its present state not later than the evening of the 2nd of September, and shall be placed at the disposal of the King of Prussia.

"Art. 5.—The officers, who shall not be willing to sign the engagement stipulated for in Art. 2, shall be conducted with their regiments to the place of their destination, in military order.

"This measure will commence on the 2nd of September and terminate on the 3rd. The soldiers will be taken along the Meuse to Yzes and placed in the hands of the German delegate by their officers, who will then give up their commands to their sub-officers; military surgeons, without exception, will remain in the rear of the trains to take care of the wounded.

(Signed) "DE WIMPFEN.  
"VON MOLTKE."

The attitude of General de Wimpffen and the other generals was calm and dignified, and it was not without hesitation that they consented to sign the disgrace of the French arms. General Ducrot alone refused obstinately to sign any kind of capitulation. *Not only did he spurn these conditions, but he also loudly expressed his contempt for those who accepted them.*

General Wimpffen alone signed; the thirty other general officers were all in favour of the capitulation.

General Ducrot acted as chief of the staff to Marshal MacMahon. In the morning, after the Marshal was wounded, he assumed the general command, and the

confidence of the army was not thereby weakened. The latter knew that General Ducrot was the Marshal's right arm, and that all the Marshal's plans were faithfully executed by him, and also that he was the only general who could replace his chief at so critical a moment.

It may be boldly affirmed that if General Ducrot had retained the command of the army the capitulation of Sedan would not have taken place. But a fatal order of the Emperor, advised probably by those around him, was sent two hours after MacMahon had fallen, directing General Ducrot to hand over the command-in-chief to General de Wimpffen, unquestionably a man of great merit, who, however, laboured under the disadvantage of having landed from Africa only forty-eight hours before, and of being unknown to the army and utterly unacquainted with MacMahon's plans. Thus it was that unfortunate circumstances fatally impelled the French to their destruction; but a final decision has yet to be passed on this frightful catastrophe. History will clear up all these details, and those who are guilty will have a terrible account to render to posterity. The sanguinary episode of Sedan, the capitulation, and the surrender of the Emperor, will form the subject of one of the most moving dramas in the history of nations. The tactics of MacMahon will be discussed, and the strategical plan of this campaign will be severely condemned, at least so far as regards its execution.

In the condition in which the army then was no general could have escaped from a catastrophe. The Emperor did not send any order.

These plans were based on false calculations. MacMahon's army had left Châlons at a favourable moment. From the day when the Marshal quitted the camp at Mourmelon up to the moment when his first engagement with the Prussians took place, he had more time than was necessary for him to cross the Meuse before the attack of the Prince of Prussia.



But it appears that the greater part of his troops, with the exception of 60,000 men, was composed of young soldiers who had been only recently called into service, and were not in a condition to endure long marches. We must add to these considerations the deficiency of provisions, the demoralization of those troops which had fought at Wissembourg, and the immense trains which always accompanied the French armies.

All these causes of delay ought to have been calculated upon by the general commanding-in-chief before embarking with his army in so dangerous a course of action, in which he might be attacked both in front and in flank by an enemy much his superior in numbers, and compelled to join battle on ground where, in case of defeat, any retreat was difficult if not impossible.

The rapid march of the Prince of Prussia, the advance of the Prince of Saxony, the movements of the Marshal, thwarted as they probably were by circumstances beyond the control of his will, and the culpable carelessness of General de Failly, who allowed himself to be surprised by the enemy at Beaumont, are certainly facts which may be appealed to in favour of the bold plan conceived by the French strategists; but, as I again repeat, the authors of this plan will some day have to render to France a strict account for the unskilfulness with which they carried it out.

The officers of the French army were absolutely stupefied when they learnt the news of the capitulation. They had not been consulted, and their anger was indescribable. The greater part of them refused to sign this dishonourable instrument. The colonels hastened to burn the flags and eagles of their regiments; the soldiers cast into the Meuse their chassepots, their swords and ammunition; and the artillerymen also threw into the river their cannon and their mitrailleuses,

Discipline did not leave them the option between signing and not signing.

so that they might not fall into the power of the enemy.

Many a brave heart which had never shrunk back before the enemy was reduced to despair under the weight of so many misfortunes. The remains of the 1st regiment of zouaves, the chasseurs d'Afrique, and the marine infantry cut their way through the columns of the enemy, and, by a supreme effort which cost most of them their lives, succeeded in escaping from the captivity that awaited them.

When any one lives in a constant state of excitement it is not possible to enjoy a moment of repose ; the need of moving about, of being useful to somebody, and of doing one's duty, keeps us constantly in suspense and confers upon us a strength which is really an anomaly in the human organization.

Although extremely depressed by fatigue and emotion, afflicted by the disasters which had fallen on my country, and my mind still disturbed by the miseries which I had witnessed during the last few days, it was no longer possible for me to remain quiet and to continue in a state of inaction.

I therefore proceeded to Bouillon, where these events were already known. An hour after I left for the village of La Chapelle, situate between Bouillon and Sedan ; thence I went to Douzy, which had been the centre of the great battle of the Thursday before. I was anxious to again examine this field of battle, of which I had only obtained a glance amidst the cannonade and the carnage. I wanted also to make sure that the fatal results had not been exaggerated in my ideas, and were such as I had figured to myself.

Knowing that La Chapelle and all the country round Sedan and Carignan were entirely occupied by the victorious enemy, the only way of making my way thither was to place myself under a neutral flag, and to follow

some Belgians who had consented to accompany me. I therefore adopted the manners of an honest citizen of this happy little country, and under the immediate protection and influence of the perfect regularity of my friends' papers, I made an excursion round the lines of my country's enemies, from whom I received the kindest welcome.

On arriving at La Chapelle, we had to retrace our steps in the direction of Florenville in order to reach Douzy. La Chapelle was occupied by a Prussian advanced-guard commanded by a colonel, who explained to us with the utmost politeness that in proceeding to Douzy by this road it would be necessary to cross the Prussian camp, and that it was out of his power to grant us permission to do this, but that we could go thither by another route by obtaining a pass from the Prince of Prussia.

In consequence, it was late in the evening when we reached Douzy. After passing in front of a few sentinels, we were conducted to a colonel of the staff, who accompanied us to several places, but always outside the camp. This gentleman, who was a Bavarian field-officer, spoke French very fluently, and for half an hour we had a most interesting conversation with him. But neither he nor the soldiers whom we met manifested the slightest undue elation at their victories. To the various questions we addressed to them they made the simple reply, "The Emperor has surrendered; it is ■ *fait accompli*, and MacMahon is dangerously wounded." At a little distance off we saw, in the middle of a group of officers, the Prince of Saxony and Count von Bismarck, the son of the great statesman. The Prince of Prussia was encamped some miles away.

A sad spectacle lay spread before our eyes; the ground was still covered with dead men there had not been time to bury, and wounded who were receiving the attention of the medical officers of the ambulances. A group of French officers, disarmed and prisoners on

parole, were sadly walking about the camps. About twelve thousand French had been taken prisoners in the last affair, the greater part of whom were slightly wounded. One of them said to me, "We were surrounded on all sides," and he accompanied his words with a gesture of despair.

But the Prussian soldiers, who looked well although they appeared fatigued, gathered round us and offered us some wine, of which they seemed to have abundance. I thought of my host at the railway station at Carignan, who had told me how his cellars had been pillaged, and how the Prince of Saxony had interfered by threatening to have the robbers shot.

We received permission to go farther on to the field of battle, but the general appearance of things was not calculated to give an agreeable character to our walk. The ground was covered with corpses; in the midst of which might be seen, confusedly mingled, broken muskets, bayonets, knapsacks, uniforms, sabres, and swords. There lay an artillery-waggon, with its horses killed; close to the body of a Prussian captain was stretched out a French chasseur. Blood, blood everywhere! Farther on we saw a zouave with his chest torn open and his arms shot off. Farther on still, a deep pit had been dug to receive the mortal remains of these poor victims of war. We hastened to quit the scene of these horrors.

In the woods which cross the Belgian frontier we saw some wounded men who had succeeded in escaping from the field of battle, and had been succoured by the charitable inhabitants and the American and English ambulances. A few hours afterwards, we met a cart filled with unhappy soldiers, dangerously wounded, and stretched out on straw; blood was trickling from the vehicle and left its traces along the road. But we have had enough of these horrible descriptions.



Prisoners continued to arrive in the different towns of Belgium, zouaves, Turcos, chasseurs, artillery, cavalry, troops of the line, &c., all in the most deplorable condition, with their clothes torn and their feet soiled with mud and blood; they were worn-out with fatigue, and many of them were so weakened by their wounds that they could scarcely stand upright.

The greatest part of these fugitives belonged to de Failly's corps, which had been partially annihilated on the Tuesday, and entirely cut off from the left wing.

A great number of Prussian prisoners also arrived in Belgium; all, both German and French, were treated with the greatest cordiality by the Belgian officers. They were at first sent to Namur; from thence the Prussians were sent to Bruges and the French to Beverloo.

Both officers and soldiers were unanimous in pitying the fate of the Emperor. They blamed the persons who surrounded him, and the incapacity of his generals, to whom they attributed the real causes of the disasters which had fallen upon the French army. Never, perhaps were the words of Napoleon I. so well verified:—"It would be better," he said, "to have a flock of sheep commanded by lions, than a flock of lions commanded by sheep." It is not enough to have legions of brave and heroic soldiers, full of devotion and ready for every sacrifice; it is also absolutely necessary that these soldiers should be commanded by experienced and capable men, and not by mere drawing-room generals.

They were commanded by generals who had proved their capacity in Africa, the Crimea, and in Italy.

The French army is not devoid of commanders of merit. Bazaine, MacMahon, Canrobert, Ducrot, Bourbaki, and numerous officers of lower rank, possessed all the requisite qualities; but they came when all the faults were committed, when the position of things was compromised, and when two decisive blows had been already



dealt at the very outset of the campaign. My opinion on this subject has not altered. On the 10th of August I wrote from Metz, "In my opinion—and it is also the opinion of people highly placed in official circles—the German Empire is a fact, and no French victory can prevent its accomplishment." My estimation of the state of things was correct; for we must not conceal from ourselves that the tendency of the German and Protestant races is to subjugate the Latin and Catholic races. The existence of France, which stood at the head of the great Latin peoples and has been for centuries the centre of civilization, is at the present day seriously menaced, and the influence which she has exercised for ages over all other nations tends more and more to pass away to Germany, her rival.

I passed through Montmédy at the very time when the little fortress was being attacked by the Prussians. After the great battles which I had witnessed at the commencement of the campaign, the siege of a little town like Montmédy appeared to be an action of only secondary interest; not that the Prussian batteries which were dismantling the walls of the town were to be despised; they were, on the contrary, of great power; they were seven in number, and I perceived half-a-dozen more in the distance, with a corps of at least 6000 men. Their fire was well directed, but cautious. The batteries were protected by the undulations of the ground, and the guns of the fortress answering them resolutely, obliged the enemy at different times to change their plan of attack.

The Prussians aimed their shells principally at the roofs of the houses, with the evident intention of setting the town on fire. This end had been partially attained; but the population of Montmédy, commanded by a retired captain, and by the *sous-préfet*, an ex-lieutenant of the Imperial navy, were not willing to surrender. At

the moment of my arrival the Prussian batteries had retired out of reach of the fortress. The soldiers were taking some food ; and to see the horses grazing quietly round the camp, and the officers walking about amongst the groups of soldiers, one would have thought that they were resting on a mere field of manœuvres. As for me, whose brain was still occupied with the horrible carnage of the late battles and the gigantic efforts of the vanquished, I looked upon this little affair with a kind of relief. I was not separated from the fortress and the enemy by a distance of more than a mile and a half, and my movements were completely unfettered.

It will be asked, perhaps, with what aim the Prussians threw away valuable time in attacking Montmédy. This attack might appear useless in the then present state of things, but when it is known that within the walls of this fortress were accumulated immense stores of provisions, which had been sent there to await the arrival of Mac-Mahon's army, the importance of the place will be easily understood. In the existing condition of the Prussians, it would have been for them an important capture ; nevertheless, in the evening the German troops retired, and the siege of the little fortress was in consequence raised.

The next day I entered Montmédy to judge for myself as to the ravages caused by the bombardment, and to obtain information from the defenders themselves, who had so courageously resisted the enemy, swearing never to surrender.

For six hours a violent fire had been aimed against the town, at the rate of six shots a minute, the fortress replying with seven shots during the same space of time. The Prussian shells were all aimed at the buildings inside the walls, the design of the enemy evidently being to set fire to the town and thus obtain a speedy capitulation. The courts

justice and several houses were entirely burnt down, but the church, although pierced by shot and shell, was still standing, and the provisions that were stored in the place were still in good condition. At noon the Prussians temporarily ceased firing, and sent in an order to capitulate. The commandant peremptorily refused, saying that he had made up his mind to blow up the place sooner than surrender. Which however

Too much praise can scarcely be awarded <sup>did not prevent him from</sup> to this brave commandant, who was a retired <sup>surrendering.</sup> captain of cavalry, named Reboul. His second in command, named Loiarec, was a captain of artillery in the *garde mobile* and an ex-commander in the mercantile marine; he was equally determined, and gave proofs of the greatest skill in pointing the heavy guns. A just tribute of praise must also be paid to the *garde mobile*, who faithfully carried out the orders of the commandants, and to the garrison of Montmédy, who have deserved well of their country.

## CHAPTER VII.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS.

DEEPLY affected by the high mark of distinction and confidence that I had just received, I hastened to publish a second edition of my work, endeavouring to re-establish facts in all their accuracy and in harmony with the annotations of the Emperor.

Maintaining the spirit of impartiality which the press and the public have been kind enough to recognize in my writings, I allowed the criticism to hold good when I thought it just, and took care to repeat the fact that I had previously established in my correspondence in *The Standard*—namely, that the Emperor had exposed himself to every danger, and that, during the battle, he had kept his position, sometimes on horseback and sometimes on foot, in the midst of the thickest of the fire—shells falling round him like hail, and officers of his suite dropping at his side, whilst the sovereign, ever impassive, seemed with composure and courage to foresee the frightful reality.

Some have taken a delight in propagating calumny and taunts as to the conduct of the Emperor; but the evidence of General Pajol, and of officers of all branches of the service who had seen for themselves, will soon be supplemented by the official report of the Prussian staff, and the grand figure of the Emperor at Sedan will be handed down to posterity just as it has been so well represented by the brush of Olivier Pichat, the celebrated painter.



THE EMPEROR AT SEDAN.



This picture is painted with remarkable talent, and represents exactly the position of the Emperor at the attack on Bazeilles; it is an affecting homage paid to truth, and the work of the courageous artist gives a definitive reply to all these calumnies and to the false reports systematically propagated by the men of the 4th of September.

In annotating my work Napoleon III. had at heart the re-establishment of the truth on several points; but—and it is a matter well worthy of remark—those passages which attack the Sovereign personally were left untouched, and the Emperor, whilst showing himself full of indulgence for others, did not desire to alter anything in the not very kindly observations made about him, however erroneous they might be.

He showed himself just the same man as ever, at all times ready to pardon and excuse the faults of his friends, but remaining dignified, impassive, and always great, in the presence of acts of injustice which were personal to himself.

END OF THE FIRST PART.



## SECOND PART.

### THE EMPEROR'S BOOK.

#### INTRODUCTION.

NAPOLEON III., when in exile, lost nothing of the extraordinary energy which had always distinguished him ; and although the malady which threatened him had made deep inroads, and his physical sufferings were sometimes intolerable, the moral force which he derived from his great soul caused him to endure extraordinary agonies with resignation and without complaint.

The ingratitude of men, and the insults that were heaped on him in France, added still further to the bitterness of the past ; but he retained his self-mastery, and preserved in appearance great serenity of mind, and that composure which constituted his best strength.

Whilst, in France, Bonapartist conspiracies were being everywhere talked about, whilst secret agents of the government were watching the approaches of Camden Place, and spies were creeping even into the imperial residence, the Emperor gave strict orders to his friends to remain quiet, and, restraining themselves, not to hinder the efforts of M. Thiers in anything whatever.

His liberal and generous mind took pleasure in rendering justice to his enemies, even the most cruel of them, and retaliation and rancour were alike unknown to him ;

the object which he set above everything was the happiness of his country. Thus, in his continual solicitude, he was always at work, and deeply examined every question; when he thought he had found a solution, he gave it publicity, without any regard for his own interest.

In the month of January, 1872, the mind of Napoleon III. was much occupied by the precarious position in which France was placed by the incessantly renewed threats of resignation made by M. Thiers; he severely censured the latter for making the country endure such violent shocks in the midst of a provisional state which every one was interested in preserving.

"After the disasters which have befallen France," he said one day to me, "it is indispensable that she should have a chief to direct and to organize her. M. Thiers is perhaps the only man who, in consequence of the revolution and other events, is independent of all parties; he has made for himself an exceptional position, and, in one word, he is become the man of the situation. Thus, from the very beginning, he found his place marked out for him in the councils of the nation; and the National Assembly has not been long in conferring upon him the attributes of a sovereign. But, in virtue of this new compact, it is evident that, in the idea of the deputies, the title and functions of President of the Republic were conferred upon him in order to establish the constitutional principle, and to render him independent of responsible ministers, who would alone be in action when contradictory debates were raised on questions of principle."

"There might be a change of ministers, but still there would be a head to govern and an arm to direct, up to the moment when the time had come to appeal to the nation. That is the reason why the Assembly has acted logically in nominating a chief who can guard against

the dangers of the provisional state ; but that also is the reason why M. Thiers is in fault for not having been willing to keep within the limits of the part that he has accepted."

I carefully collected the wise and patriotic reflections which the Emperor was good enough to communicate to me ; and impressed by these elevated thoughts, I set to work to developpe them in the *Chronique Européenne*, a newspaper I was publishing in London.

For several months I worked nearly every day with the Emperor, who was writing a book upon the military forces of France, and the campaign of 1870.

The aim of this work was, in the Emperor's idea, firstly, to reply to the statement made by M. Thiers in his message, that the Second Empire had neglected the army, and had been unable either to organize or to employ the military resources of France ; and, secondly, to re-establish, by official proofs, the truth as to the facts. The work was divided into two portions, one treating of the military forces, the other containing a succinct and official epitome of the campaign down to the capitulation of Sedan.

The whole of the work was written by the Emperor's hand, as will be seen by the letters and annotations I publish above ; and my part of the task was limited to correcting the proofs and superintending the publication of the work. It was finished about the end of January ; but following the advice of certain influential personages, the Emperor one day announced to me that for the time he had given up the idea of publishing this work.

A few months later, at the time of the discussion in the Assembly of the new army law, his Majesty instructed me to make a few changes, and to have that portion of the work which dealt with the military forces printed as a pamphlet ; after having revised the



whole, and added an appendix, the Emperor ordered me to give it publicity, and to sign it with my own name.

This pamphlet, published by M. Amyot in the month of May last, has made noise enough to render further mention unnecessary; and among English journalists, as well as in the French press, it was perfectly well known, and also written, that the signature of the Count de la Chapelle concealed the name of the real author—the Emperor Napoleon III.

“At some future day you will publish the whole,” said the Emperor to me; “and my poor work will thus see the light in its entirety.” I have therefore piously preserved the Emperor’s work, waiting for the time, the opportunity, and, above all, the order, to bring it out. Alas! I was very far from suspecting that a catastrophe was so close at hand, and that it would not be until after the death of the Emperor that I should have to fulfil the duty which his will had imposed upon me.

It is, so to speak, a posthumous work, in which the august Sovereign has displayed all the vigour of his remarkable talents, and the man of genius traces out with simplicity some grand conceptions; in which, also, he has sadly avowed how he had been deceived, whilst at the same time, he endeavours to excuse the guilty.

What Napoleon III. says of the capitulation of Sedan is sublime in its grandeur and resignation. But comments are useless; I reproduce, phrase by phrase and word by word, the manuscript of the Emperor, just as it was printed under my direction in January, 1872, and was intended to appear.

The first portion contains, therefore, the “Military Forces of France;” the second, the “History and Plan of the Campaign of 1870,” down to the Capitulation of Sedan.

## PREFACE.

WITH CORRECTIONS OF SENTENCES AND WORDS IN THE EMPEROR'S  
HANDWRITING. (*See APPENDIX.*)

IN order to estimate impartially the causes of the disasters which have overwhelmed France, it is necessary to study carefully the various phases through which our military organization has passed. For this purpose, it is important to publish all the official documents which may enlighten public opinion. We now give those we have been able to procure, and they possess a real historical interest. By setting forth the real state of the military forces for 1870, and the efforts made to augment them ; by making known the numerous resources which France possessed ; by calling to mind the illusions that were entertained by some most competent men as to the promptitude with which it was possible to pass from a peace-footing to a war-footing, it will be convincingly shown, that the especial need was neither men, nor horses, nor war-material, nor supplies of provisions, but an organization which would have allowed of all these elements being opportunely brought together on the spot where they were to be employed.

Without disregarding the faults which may have been committed, the principal cause of our reverses is that, on the 6th of August, when the German troops made their attack at Froschwiller and Spicheren, the French army was not ready ; for neither its effective forces nor its

stores of provisions were at their full complement. This consideration is of the highest importance at the time when a fresh organization of the army is about to be discussed.

COMTE DE LA CHAPELLE.

*London, May, 1872.*

Camden Place,  
Chislehurst.

Il faut que les titres qui  
représentent les mêmes  
catégories, ainsi les mêmes  
caractères, ainsi artillerie  
| p. 13 | doit être comme  
du même caractère que  
Traité des épiques | p. 16 |  
Jumeaux. Chevrons et Mules  
| p. 56 | doivent être plus petits  
comme Préface à  
page 87.



M<sup>re</sup> le Comte de La Chapelle  
200 Fleet St. E.C.  
London.

Mon cher Monsieur de La Chapelle  
je vous prie de faire à la  
page 95 la correction suivante  
que j'ai omise :

L'Empire corrigé que dans  
de nouvelles conditions le peuple  
de Rome devenant inviolable  
et obéissant pour ainsi dire  
à l'empereur de l'armée  
et de la nation il se décide à  
...

Amicalement votre  
ami

W. G. L.



M<sup>r</sup> le Comte de La Chapelle  
48. Cornhill. E. C.  
London.



~~Considérations~~

Les trois armées allemandes qui participent à l'attaque <sup>est commune</sup>  
1. la campagne comptant une 33,800 hommes... Les armées  
de réserve ne participent pas plus tard sur les  
champs de bataille

// La promptitude de l'investissement empêche l'occupation  
de la place.

# On se rappelle  
la glorieuse mais  
infructueuse bataille  
de Bezonville et  
de St Privat et  
éprouva un mortel  
regret de ne pas  
avoir profité

Plan de l'attaque 76 et 77

entre les années

pages 58 et 59

# THE MILITARY FORCES OF FRANCE

AND THE

## CAMPAIGN OF 1870.

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### CHAPTER I.

MILITARY STATE OF FRANCE FROM 1852 TO 1867.

WHEN the Empire was established by the popular vote of December, 1852, one of the opinions most generally credited was that the military forces of France corresponded to the part that the country might be called upon to play in Europe, and that we were in a position to resist any foreign aggression.

Thirty-seven years of peace had thoroughly warped the minds of the nation, and the easy successes of the African war had given an exaggerated idea of our power.

During the war with Russia, which took place in 1854, the men at the head of the Government began to recognize the insufficiency of our organization for maintaining a great war. The army sent to the Crimea attained by the numbers sent in succession, the sum total of 200,000 men; but the Minister of War experienced the greatest difficulty in maintaining it at this level during the siege

of Sebastopol. For three successive years, it was necessary to raise the contingent to 140,000 men, and to take away the best soldiers from all the regiments remaining in France, in order to reinforce those who were engaged in the campaign.

The ordinary means for keeping up the effectives of the regiments which are before the enemy consists in training the young soldiers in the *depôts*, and when they are sufficiently instructed, sending them to join their corps ; but to make them capable of rendering any useful service, it is necessary for them to have passed at least six months in the *depôt*, and that only a certain proportion of them should be incorporated in the effective force of the regiment, so as not to diminish its solidity. When no provident organization has been established, so as to give time to the administration to train soldiers before sending them on to the army, and when necessity compels that the effective force should be filled up with youths imperfectly drilled, nothing but a wretched performance is produced. From 1854 to 1856, the Minister of War constantly received from General Canrobert, and afterwards from Marshal Pélissier, many urgent despatches, all bearing the same purport.

"It is indispensable," they said, "that the gaps in our effectives should be filled up ; but if you continue to send us half-trained boys of twenty, you are spending money to no purpose ; they cannot render any good service and only go to populate our hospitals. What we want are grown men and well-practised soldiers."

In the presence of these complaints, which were incessantly renewed, what did the Minister of War do ?—with reluctance, it is true. From every regiment remaining in France, he selected a certain number of old soldiers, and sent them to the Crimea. The campaigning army certainly profited by this ; but the measure, although dictated by necessity, was a deplorable one, for in order

to support the numbers of the Crimean troops, *esprit de corps* was destroyed, disorganization was produced, and the whole army was weakened.

The result of the war of 1854 went to prove that the military organization of our country did not allow of our maintaining in a state of efficiency out of France an army of more than 200,000 men, since the troops remaining at home could no longer be looked upon as anything more than depôts intended to fill up the vacancies in the campaigning army.

Being thus enlightened by experience, and reflecting how unjust it was to make the burden of the war weigh upon one generation only, the Emperor, in suddenly raising the contingent to 140,000 men, decided,—1st, that the annual contingent should be raised from 80,000 to 100,000 men; 2ndly, that in order to create a reserve, a portion of well-trained men should receive renewable leave, so as to furnish, when the need arrived, a considerable number of grown men and experienced soldiers.

In 1859, during the Italian war, the men on renewable furlough were recalled to service, but they were assembled with difficulty; they fancied themselves entirely freed from the service, and did not respond to all that might justly have been expected of them. A still more grievous disappointment awaited those who had the greatness of the country at heart, when they saw that even with this reserve which it had been so ~~to call out into active service~~, the military of France did not allow of her having at two great armies on the frontiers.

Figures possess a certain eloquence, with which false theories must clash; in 1859, France had on arms 380,000 men and about 150,000 on renewable furlough; the levy of the same year reached that of 140,000 men. There were only 210,000

crossed the Alps, and yet all that remained in France were not capable of forming an army solid enough to resist an invasion on the Rhine.

This fact, which appears extraordinary and has been disputed, as we shall see farther on, by Marshal Randon, is nevertheless easy of explanation. Unless the troops of a great country are divided in time of peace into army-corps, each having in reserve in its circumscription both cadres and trained soldiers, it comes to pass, that, in suddenly forming a considerable army, the best men, both officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, are taken away from every corps; the part that remains is perhaps numerous, but is incapable of constituting a strong and stable army.

The examples of these two wars were calculated to call forth serious reflections on the part of the chief of the State, and to induce him to seek for means for improving our army; but how many were the difficulties that he had to overcome! The first was to force public opinion to admit that which it refused to recognize, the inferiority of our military organization.

Whilst men capable of forming a judgment derived, even from our successes, a conviction of our weakness, the public, who saw nothing but the advantages obtained and the heavy figures of the budget, was disposed to deem that France possessed too large an army.

since 1854, the cadres of the army had been considerable proportions; the regiments reached the number of 102; the battalions had been increased from ten to twelve; a new regiment of zouaves and a fresh regiment of sharpshooters, natives of Africa, had just been formed; the imperial guard had received the following augmentation:—one regiment of gendarmes, three regiments of mousquetaires, four regiments of voltigeurs, one



regiment of zouaves, one battalion of foot chasseurs, six regiments of cavalry, two regiments of artillery, two companies of engineers, and one squadron of the military train. With regard to organization there had been no change; the law of 1832 still remained the general rule.

During the years which followed the Peace of Villafranca, many projects of reform were discussed in the councils of the Emperor; but the Sovereign was speedily convinced that neither the different ministers nor the Chambers would assist him in gaining acceptance for the only principles on which the system of the national forces of a great country can be firmly based.

Thus, obligatory service, the augmentation of the duration of active duty under the colours, allowing of the formation of an effective reserve; the definitive and lasting settlement, by the Chambers, of the numbers of the annual contingent; the indivisibility of regiments, and the creation of permanent army-corps;—all these were questions which the Emperor found himself obliged to abandon. Being unable any longer to think of changing the established system, he was compelled to confine himself to rendering it as little faulty as possible. It was, in consequence, decided that, out of the annual contingent of 100,000 men, one part should go to recruit the active army, and the other should be trained in the dépôts, for three months the first year, two months the second, and one month the third.

This arrangement, which doubtless was not perfect, nevertheless gave to France at the end of a few years a reserve of more than 200,000 men equipped and to some extent trained. But whilst at the Tuileries one of the chief anxieties was to establish on broad bases the military institutions of France, in the *corps législatif* and even in the ministry, ideas of economy and reform had regained the upper hand to such a degree that, in 1865, the Government found itself compelled to reduce con-

siderably the cadres of the army. In every regiment of infantry, two companies were then done away with, and the sixth squadron in every regiment of heavy cavalry and of cavalry of the line. Two regiments of carabiniers of the line were disbanded. The guard was diminished by fourteen companies of infantry, representing nearly three battalions, by nine squadrons of cavalry, by its divisions of engineers, and by four batteries of artillery.

These inopportune reductions had scarcely been carried out, when the rapid successes of Prussia in the war against Austria in 1866 came and opened the eyes of all who paid attention to the subject, and shewed them the danger that was involved in reducing the army for the sake of realizing a saving of only a few millions. At the same time, men who just before had manifested ultra-pacific views demanded that we should go to war with Prussia, at a time when our infantry was not armed with quick-shooting, breach-loading guns, when our fortresses were not in a state of defence, and when our cadres had just been reduced and a part of the army was engaged out of France. The Emperor resisted with all his strength the bellicose ideas which had taken possession of a portion of the public. Would that it had been the same in 1870!

A report spread at this time that the war in Mexico had exhausted our stores of all kinds, and that the cause of our pacific attitude in Europe was to be attributed to this cause. Marshal Randon, then Minister of War, who, however, retired at the commencement of 1867, handed to the Emperor, on leaving the Ministry, a report which proved how false were the allegations which had been propagated by malevolence.

By the reproduction of this document, it will be perceived that, although the Marshal was right in asserting that the Mexican expedition had not diminished our stores, still he was deceiving himself with fatal delusions

when he maintains that, both in 1859 and also in 1866, the army was ready to undertake a great war. We have given this report, and it will be read with interest, for it shows how the most capable and competent men refused to recognize the defects of our military organization.

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## NOTE ON THE STATE OF THE ARMY IN 1866.

BY MARSHAL RANDON.

"WHEN the political horizon is serene, and nothing appears likely to disturb it, the army is reproached with the sacrifices which it imposes on the treasury, and it is classed in the category of unproductive expenses; every item in its budget is rigorously discussed, credits the most indispensable for its provisioning and remounts are meted out with parsimony.

"But only let a cloud appear, and increasing seem the precursor of a storm, the scene suddenly changes. Those very people who could see nothing in the army but an excessive charge on the public property, are the very first to turn towards it anxious glances, to seek to estimate its real value, and to place under its safeguard the honour and safety of the country.

"If, during the time of peace, the methodical organization of the army had not been kept up to a sufficient degree of efficiency; what would then happen?

"There is no doubt that by its patriotism the nation would always be inspired with the enthusiasm necessary to repel an invasion; but if the regular army was not strongly constituted and capable of facing any danger coming from without, what weight would be possessed in the balance of Europe by a nation which had nothing

to throw into it but diplomatic arguments, without being able to add, as it should be able to do, the complement of its sword?

"The integrity of the territory would be preserved, but the national influence would be lost.

"Thus the liveliest anxiety of the chief of the administration of the army has always been to maintain our military position at the elevation due to its mission.

"Does this mean that the army is to be constantly ready to plunge unexpectedly into a European struggle? When external conflicts and the unforeseen miscalculations of diplomacy bring about crises which baffle all the calculations of politics, would it be just, would it be in conformity with reason, to demand of an army on a peace footing some immediate action which would render it responsible for the destiny of the country? And yet, do we not see the most competent men, sometimes even some of those who share in directing the affairs of the state, crying out, 'We could not do any better, we were not ready!' A very easy excuse, which the public accepts without verifying; an explanation which spreads gloom and dismay among the friends of the government, and encourages its adversaries.

"When the Peace of Villafranca suddenly put an end to the war of 1859, the reason was, it has been said, that we were not in a position either to continue the Italian campaign, or to face the struggle which might take place on the Rhine.

"When the war broke out between Austria and Prussia, we were not ready to take a part in any degree defiant.

"At the present time when Prussia, faithful to the instincts of her encroaching ambition, is becoming menacing, we are not ready to remind her that since Jena we have not had to measure ourselves with her in single combat.



“We are not ready! If that means that, at a day’s notice, we could not instantaneously throw upon the frontier an army of 400,000 combatants, supplied with all the necessary stores and in a position to engage in a great war with every chance of success, most assuredly we are not ready to meet necessities of this kind.

“For such enterprises, effective forces, reserves, and enormous supplies of stores are required; what nation is there which, in a state of peace, could face such terrible risks?

“No; an array of force like this is not possible, or at all events to arrive at it would need so formidable a peace establishment, that the limits of the budget would not be able to admit of it in any country whatever. All the men who have hitherto presided in France over the destinies of the army, have confined themselves to a position more restricted and more in harmony with our financial resources, but still allowing the possibility of a prompt mobilization of the military forces of the country.

“These forces were ready in 1859, for the cadres contained 600,000 men, only 200,000 of whom had crossed the Alps. It would assuredly have been possible to constitute a new army, if a wise spirit of moderation had not put a stop to a war which could no longer produce advantages commensurate with its sacrifices.

“We were ready in 1866, for a report of the Minister of War proved that, by calling out the reserves, we might in one month assemble under the colours 450,000 men, the armies of Africa, Mexico, and Rome, being deducted. On this occasion too, it was political considerations that prevented war.

The same military position existed last January; the numbers were augmented by the troops returned from Rome, and were soon to be increased by those who were on their way home from Mexico. Our effective force



was then at its normal complement, and, under these circumstances, the Government gave a fresh proof of its moderation, by preferring an intervention of the great powers to bring about a peaceful solution, instead of entering upon the chances of a war which could not fail to be a serious one. But the question as to the effective force of an army is not the only condition which concerns its real value.

“The constitution of the cadres ;

“The resources in supplies of stores of all kinds which are contained in the magazines and arsenals ;

“Lastly, the arming of the troops. All these points form essential conditions for preparing success in war.

#### I. CONSTITUTION OF CADRES.

“In the constitution of cadres it is laid down as an axiom, that the good organization of an army consists in a system of cadres which allows of passing immediately from a peace footing to a war footing ; to a certain extent and for a certain amount of effectives, this is accurate, but it is otherwise if it is wished to attain to numbers out of proportion with the normal state, the state of peace.

“Thus an army of 300,000 men, deducting non-effectives, may well be raised to 500,000, without any sensible augmentation of the cadres ; but it would not be possible without risk to exceed this figure, because the tactical units, such as the company, the squadron, and the battery, would then present serious difficulties as respects the administration and exercising command. If at the outset of a campaign the company is raised to 150 men, the squadron to 160 horses and 200 men, and the battery to 250 men, the composition of the cadres may adapt itself to this increase, but to go beyond it would produce serious inconvenience.

“Now with our present cadres of twenty-two com-

panies' in a regiment of infantry, of five or six squadrons (according to the branch it belongs to) in a regiment of cavalry, and of six to twelve batteries (according to its destination) in a regiment of artillery, and by raising the effectives to the numbers stated above, we attain the amount of 500,000 combatants which has been mentioned; if to this amount we add that of the organic non-effectives and of the dépôt cadres, we get at the general force of 620,000 men which represents our present military position.

"This reasoning applies only to this order of ideas. If we admit of an eventual effective force of 800,000 men, we then broach the double question of the augmentation of both the cadres and also the regiments; we enter upon another course of action which calls for mature reflection, for whenever a measure of this kind is adopted, it is necessary to carry forward our thoughts to the time when it will be requisite to return to our normal state, that is, to suppress all that had been created for temporary circumstances. New formations must be carried out with great circumspection, so as not to be compelled some day—to-morrow perhaps—to destroy what has just been made, and thus to produce in the army, by the stoppage of promotion, a discontent more intense and more durable than the temporary satisfaction caused by the sudden exhaustion of the lists for promotion. We have the examples of the past before us, and it is prudent to take account of them.

"Upon the whole, it may be admitted that a good organization of the army is that which is consistent with cadres, which can receive, in case of war, double the number of effectives in soldiers as compared with the peace establishment. In anything beyond this proportion, the duties of command and administration would be exercised with considerable difficulty.

■ The regiments had at this time been reduced by two companies.

"If, on the contrary, looking forward to the increase of the effective force being raised to its utmost limit, it is preferred to constitute beforehand cadres which shall be in proportion to this extreme number of effectives; then, so long as peace lasts, the army is, as it were, encumbered with officers and sub-officers, who, it may be said, are without any useful employment; instruction, from a lack of opportunity for practice, becomes deteriorated; want of employment gets the upper hand; the military spirit is enfeebled; and, lastly, the recruiting of the cadres is imperilled from want of candidates coming forward; and the treasury has to sustain enormous charges.

"I will add, that, supposing it should become necessary to call out into active service the entire body of men bound to serve, it would be right in every case, before creating new cadres, to begin by filling up those that already exist; this appears rational, and admits of proceeding with more discretion in the formation—always so delicate a matter—of new cadres.

"Those which we possess are sufficient, as was stated at the commencement, for calling into active service the total effective force that we have at our disposal according to the votes of the last annual contingents. As regards this first point, the army was, therefore, always in a complete state of preparation. Was the case the same as regards the supplies of stores?

## 2. SUPPLIES OF STORES.

"There is no doubt that the storehouses should be abundantly supplied with articles of all kinds to be used for the clothing of the troops, for their equipment, for the ambulances, and other objects dependent on the administrative department.

"These supplies are limited by the legislative credits, which declare every year the scale on which they can be provided.

“ All that concerns the essential points of clothing and covering of the feet is ■ consideration on which it is proper to lay much stress.

“ The critical circumstances in which the war administration stood at the time of the Italian war, in regard to insuring a supply of clothing, determined the Minister of war to promote the establishment of great factories, in which the fact of mechanical agency being substituted to ■ great extent for hand-work would afford such facility to the making up of work in the manufacture of clothing and shoes, that all anxiety on the part of the administrative department in the dreaded transition from a peace establishment to a war establishment would disappear, or, at least, be considerably diminished.

“ The factories of Godillot, by means of their powerful organization, have in fact solved this problem by being able to produce 4000 pairs of shoes per day, and to make up 50,000 suits of clothing or equipments per month.

“ It will be sufficient to remind ourselves that, at the commencement of the Italian war, an appeal made in every department to the private trade resulted, in the space of two months, in only 10,000 pairs of shoes being deposited in the warehouses. Similar difficulties occurred in the making up of clothing.

“ After the statements which have just been made, it may clearly be seen what resources for the supplies of clothing and shoes for the army are presented by the factories of Godillot, and the part that the latter must play in the preparatory arrangements of the administration.

“ And yet, just at the time when the reports of ■ war with Prussia began to ■■■■■ consistency, rumours were propagated among the public about the unsatisfactory position of our supplies of stores ; it was besides stated that our arsenals had been extraordinarily impoverished

in order to provide for the needs of the Mexican expedition.

“ These false reports, propagated by malevolence and received with levity, assumed an importance sufficient to agitate public opinion, and to cause a suspicion of carelessness and negligence.

“ It is true enough that the supplies of cloth, which at the time of the Italian war received a considerable increase, had experienced since 1860 a remarkable diminution, owing to the annual reduction of the credits in the budget.

“ Nevertheless the emptiness of our storehouses was far from being such an accomplished fact as people were pleased to state; and the following lists, taken at the date of July 1, 1866, and January 1, 1867, are evident proofs of this :—

*Position of the Storehouses on July 1, 1866.*

“ Woollen and linen cloth and materials sufficient to make up—

Suits of clothes . . . . .	500,000
Coats . . . . .	110,000
Great coats . . . . .	95,000
Pairs of trousers . . . . .	143,000
Shakos . . . . .	269,000
Shoes (pairs) . . . . .	476,000

“ The war administration, looking forward to events which might take place, and in order to be in a position to respond, according to circumstances, to the demands of the troops, made in the course of July supplementary orders for cloth and shoes, which raised to ten millions the credits to be charged to the services of 1866 and 1867.

“ In consequence of these orders the position of the storehouses in the month of January presented the following figures :—



“Woollen and linen cloth and materials sufficient to make up—

Suits of clothes . . . . .	546,000
Coats . . . . .	200,000
Great coats : . . . .	145,000
Pairs of trousers . . . . .	143,000
Shakos . . . . .	335,000
Shoes (pairs) . . . . .	683,493

“In the demand for extraordinary credits the minister did not confine himself to that which had to do with the clothing of the troops; he desired also to provide for the full complement of material for the ambulances; and, lastly, for the purchase of 1500 to 2000 horses specially intended for the draught service of the artillery. This addition could only be an instalment for the remounting service, which, in case of war, would have had to furnish 8000 horses for the cavalry, and nearly double that number for the artillery and baggage-trains.

“The amount of the various orders given by the initiatory action of the Minister of war was thirteen millions.

“Such was the general position of the supplies of military stores, either in stock or in course of delivery, at the end of the year 1866.

“This position proves that, within the limits of the effective force allowed at this time, we were in a position to meet every need; and this consideration alone would suffice as a reply to the oft-repeated allegation that the Mexican expedition had exhausted, or, at all events, compromised, the stock of our stores in our arsenals and storehouses.

“This last criticism, although unfounded, made a forcible impression upon the public; it will not therefore be inopportune to reply to it categorically.

“We will, in the first place, speak of our arsenals;

we will then enter upon the question regarding our store-houses.

"In respect to the detachments sent by the administration, three thoroughly distinct\* phases must be recognized in the Mexican expedition.

"The first commences at the end of 1861, on the departure of the first contingent, which landed at Vera Cruz on the 9th of January, 1862.<sup>1</sup> Its effective force consisted of 3310 men, 2686 of whom were furnished by the department of marine, and only 624 belonged to the land army.

"This first detachment was, as is well known, intended to operate in conjunction with the Spanish troops; but, in consequence of circumstances which it is useless to recapitulate here, it was soon compelled to act by itself, and consequently received a reinforcement of 4573 men, who were placed under command of General Lorencez, and landed at Vera Cruz from the 23rd to the 28th of March, 1862. •

"In the second phase must be placed the march from Orizaba to Puebla (April 27th), a fruitless attack on the latter town (May 5th), and, lastly, the return of the small corps to Orizaba.

"Then commenced the third phase, when, in order to face the circumstances which had intervened, the forces sent by France were compelled to assume a much more serious character. General Forey left for Mexico with 22,320 men. These troops, who landed at Vera Cruz between the 23rd of August and the 5th of November, received a more solid and complete organization; the eventualities of a siege, in order to take possession of Puebla, had been foreseen, and the necessary artillery *matériel* was consequently prepared. This *matériel*, including that attached to Lorencez' division, was composed

\* The Spanish had taken possession of Vera Cruz on the 17th of September, 1861.

of eight batteries or forty-eight guns, namely, four field batteries of four-pounder guns, a mountain battery, a battery of twelve-pounder field guns, and two batteries of twelve-pounder siege guns. Reckoning the quantity of ammunition that had already been previously sent, it may be calculated that this ordnance was supplied on the average with material for 623 shots per gun; the ammunition for the infantry made up a general total of 12,882,716 cartridges which was to serve, not only for the supply of our soldiers, but also of the Mexican troops when acting with us, and subsequently of the Belgian and Austrian auxiliaries.

“With these supplies, both for artillery and infantry, the two attacks on Puebla (the second assuming the proportions of a regular siege) were carried on; the expedition to Oajaca was undertaken, and ultimately many battles were fought on all points of this vast field of action, over which, for four years, the operations of the Army of Mexico were spread.

“After 1863 the sending of ammunition ceased, and in March, 1864, the marshal commanding the expeditionary force wrote to the Minister of War that the supplies then stored in the magazines appeared sufficient, and that there was no occasion to send any more from France. The marshal added to his despatch a tabular account of the position of these supplies, according to which there were then in Mexico 11,803,649 cartridges of all kinds.

“This example suffices to enable us to form an idea of the consumption of ammunition that took place in Mexico, by comparing the quantities sent with the quantities remaining.

“If, now, any one will compare the quantity of stores and material of all kinds sent to Mexico by the ordnance department with the quantity that existed in the arsenals, it will be acknowledged that the supplies sent, especially

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taking into consideration that they were spread over four years, represent quantities of no importance compared with the position in which our arsenals then stood.<sup>1</sup>

“It must be added that there were also delivered to the Mexican government a certain number of guns of an old pattern, and from thirty to forty thousand kilos. of powder; but the value of these guns and this powder ought to have been reimbursed to the French treasury, in which it should figure as a part of the debt due from Mexico to France.

“The question as to the exhaustion of our stores of clothing still has to be dealt with.

“Let us, in the first place, call to mind that the Mexican expeditionary force was included in the effective force of the army, that is, in the number of 400,000 men which annually figures in the budget. From this it follows that the general cost of maintaining the stock of clothing did not exceed the credits allowed in the budget.

“In the second place, each of the corps which formed part of the expedition had its own *depôt* in France and in Algeria, and consequently never made application to the central storehouses in order to obtain made-up articles of apparel. The central storehouses, therefore, had no need to interfere in clothing the expeditionary army. It is, in fact, a matter of principle that the *depôts* of regiments are charged with the task of making up the articles of clothing which are to replace others in proportion as the latter have lasted the regulated period; also that these fresh supplies are carried

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, if we reflect that if this same effective of the Mexican army had remained in France, it would have expended in firing exercise an amount of ammunition at least equal to that which it consumed in war, it will be readily understood that this asserted exhaustion of our arsenals is a fable, the invention of which can only be attributed to a complete ignorance of our military and administrative mechanism.

into effect at fixed epochs, and by the instrumentality of these same depôts, whether the battalions are in France or abroad. The reserves of clothing had, therefore, nothing to do for the troops in Mexico, and could not experience any loss through them.

“All that the central storehouses sent to Mexico consisted of articles of linen and boots and shoes. But we must not lose sight of the fact that these articles are chargeable to the individual mass, and that consequently the deliveries took place only on the score of advances, and that the deficiency caused in the storehouses could be promptly and easily filled up.

### 3. ARMING OF THE TROOPS.

“This is a question which has much aroused public opinion, and as to which numerous criticisms, as unfounded as those with which we have previously dealt, have been addressed to the department of War.

“The arming of the troops has at all times been considered as a point of chief importance to an army. In France we have always applied ourselves to bringing it to perfection by keeping ourselves conversant with the improvements introduced in foreign countries. The breech-loading gun, brought into use in 1849, in the infantry of the Prussian Guard, was accepted in France with only the very greatest caution. This weapon afforded some advantages, no doubt; but professional men found defects in it which weakened its qualifications. It was heavy, the stopping-up of the vent very incomplete, &c.; the effective range, too, was very short (430 yards only). Besides, the very principle of breech-loading was strongly contested; some might bring against it its somewhat complicated machinery, which, in the case of a protracted and distant war, it would be difficult to keep in order; the cartridges intended for it are of a delicate construction, and require skilled workmen to make them and



a special kind of powder ; the consumption of ammunition would be considerable, precisely on account of the rapidity of firing ; the trains of ammunition would have to be sent from a distance, and would be subject to the chances of a long journey. In attacking a position rapid firing is devoid of any great utility, and cannot produce any decisive effect against an enemy generally well protected and advantageously posted ; in skirmishing it matters little whether the soldier fires often, but rather that he should take a correct aim, two conditions which are seldom found combined.

“ Many other reflections might be made on the employment of the breech-loading guns, but it will suffice to add that, although the Prussian weapon had been known for a long time, none of the other European powers had adopted it, not even those who had fought either against Prussia or on its side. But after the brilliant campaign of the last year the effect has been produced, from the head of the military hierarchy down to its lowest rank, that the condemnation of the present arm is pronounced. It is a torrent running with full force, which nothing can stop. It is necessary to follow the current, only some material space of time is requisite for placing the new arm in the hands of our soldiers ; but, in their inconsiderate haste, many persons, who only a year ago considered the Prussian gun as an inferior weapon of war, and would have been but little inclined to approve of the enormous expense which the new arm would entail, are now raising a cry of alarm, and even go so far as to accuse the War Administration because the army is not yet provided with a rapid-firing weapon.

“ An historical abstract of the system of arming the troops in France is necessary in order to make it understood with what prudent wisdom the ordnance department has carried out the difficult investigation as to the best weapon to be adopted.

“ At the time, when the Prussians were experimenting on the needle-gun, the introduction of rifling in gun-barrels gave to percussion-guns a fresh value, which allowed of our placing in the hands of our troops, and at a small expense, arms which certainly fired less rapidly than the Prussian gun, but had a ballistic value very superior to the latter. The rifle of the chasseurs, for instance, delivered an accurate and destructive fire at a range of from 800 to 1000 yards.

“ A solution of the question, which had been brought forward rather than solved by Prussia, was nevertheless sought for in France. In 1854, Colonel Treuille de Beaulieu proposed the gun with which the *cent-gardes* are still armed. In 1858, MM. Manccau-Vieillard and Chassepot introduced a breech-loading gun, but with the priming separate from the cartridge. Having been submitted to experiments by the permanent musketry commission at Vincennes, an order was afterwards given to make a few hundreds of this arm, and trials on a large scale were commenced by regiments of infantry and cavalry, in both France and Algeria at the same time.

“ But in the interval, the attention of the artillery department had been called to a new scientific idea, namely, that in rifled arms the length of the projectile should be at least double its diameter, an idea which would irresistibly lead to small calibres.

“ In the month of February, 1863, the War Minister, on the report of an ordnance committee, ordered the manufacture of a certain number of guns with a calibre of .433 of an inch, with which was to be used a cartridge carrying its own priming, to be lighted by a needle, according to the Prussian idea.

“ M. Chassepot, the controller of arms, was commissioned to establish the manufacture of the arm, and to inquire as to the cartridge, aided and advised by

Major Maldan. The task was a laborious one and required a whole year to complete it. It is, in fact, a difficult matter to solve the questions relating to the construction of a new arm, by properly arranging all its parts, its weight, its form, the shape and weight of the projectile, and the composition of the cartridge.

“ Ultimately, at the latter end of 1865, after numerous attempts, a model was exhibited to the Emperor, and orders were sent to the arms-factory at Châtellerault for the manufacture of 500 guns of this kind, which were to be placed in the hands of the troops assembled in 1866 at the camp of Châlons, and to be submitted to the test of practical use.

“ In consequence of this final trial, and through the imperial decision of April the 30th, 1866, the gun now in course of manufacture was adopted for arming our infantry.

“ After the breaking up of the camp, the arms which had been used in the experiments were handed to the battalion of foot-chasseurs of the imperial guard, who had the task allotted to them of preparing all the elements of the instructions to be drawn up in respect to the handling and keeping in repair of the new gun.

- “ In the well-founded anticipation, that the arm in question would be adopted, and in order to take advantage of time, which is always so precious when the matter at stake is altering the arming of the troops, the War-administration, in June, 1866, built and fitted up at Puteaux a factory for the fabrication of the machines which were to be used in our manufactories, and in the month of July, the contractors for these establishments received orders to make 300,000 arms, so that they might place themselves in a position to procure the raw material which would afford them a facility in executing these orders.

“ From this date it was possible to enter upon the construction of the model weapon, and on this model to

attempt the long and difficult operations of fitting, that is, the construction of the working parts, mechanism, guides and tools properly so called.

“ We see here what an uninterrupted succession there has been of attempts to arrive at a weapon possessing the rapidity of firing of the Prussian gun, but showing a great superiority over the latter both in its ballistic qualities, and also in the perfection of its working parts and the lightness of its weight.

“ Let us now examine the conditions of the manufacture, looking at the difficulties which it presented.

“ In order to estimate duly the importance of the operations which were consequent on the adoption of the model of 1866, we must in the first place examine the position of the four arm-factories of the State at the commencement of 1866.

“ Their turn-out of manufacture amounted to 40,000 new arms per year. The most important of the four, that of Saint-Etienne, was in process of reconstruction. It was necessary to pass suddenly from a yearly manufacture of 40,000 guns to one of 150,000 or perhaps 300,000, and to make enormous provisions of raw material in the midst of the general competition of all the military nations who came to us and exhausted our stocks of cast-steel and especially of walnut-wood. For this, it was requisite to substitute manufacture by machinery for work by hand, to construct 1200 machines, and moreover to alter all the habits of the workmen employed in the gunsmiths' trade.

“ The ordnance department, by its activity and the precision which it brings to everything that it takes in hand, will be able in less than a year to place the four manufactories of the State in a position to satisfy, by regular and continuous work, all the exigencies of the moment, by placing in our arsenals 1000 guns a day.



“In the United States thirty manufactories of arms were established or enlarged at the commencement of the War of Secession. They did not turn out any the first year, although manufacturing a weapon easier to make than ours; at the end of two years they did not furnish beyond 2000 guns ■ day.

“The War Administration has absolved itself from the reproach of not having had recourse to private trade. It ordered 50,000 guns of a company, which, although authorized to have them made simultaneously at Liège and Birmingham, was not willing to engage to furnish them before the 1st of April, 1868, and consented only with difficulty to promise 20,000 by the 1st of January in the same year. At the same dates the imperial manufactories will have furnished more than 380,000 arms, at the price of 2*l.* 18*s.* 4*d.* each at most, instead of 3*l.* 10*s.* 10*d.* at least, the price asked by private makers.

“Prussia, which has indisputably the merit of having opened out the path in which all nations are seeking to follow her, is at the present time much behindhand, even as regards rapidity of firing.

“Austria, England, and the United States, are hesitating between various models.

“Russia and Italy are waiting, before they decide, to see what other nations will do.

“Ought, therefore, France to regret that the ordnance department has acted with wise moderation and has not sacrificed everything to the vain and dangerous satisfaction of being more expeditious in giving to the army an imperfectly studied weapon? When an expense of more than a hundred millions of francs is the matter in question, time employed in earnest labour is most assuredly not time lost, and it will tend to the honour of the ordnance department that, in spite of a short-sighted clamour, they have patiently studied the arm which will be the gun of the future.



■ It is not, therefore, the War Administration which has been deficient in foresight; and none of the services which are dependent on it have been put in jeopardy.

“If, under the circumstances we have just passed through, public opinion has cast an anxious glance towards the army, we must attribute to other causes this moment of uncertainty, which has caused a doubt to be entertained as to the strength of our military institutions.

“These causes must be sought for in that tendency to criticism which brings everything under discussion.

“A love of change has taken possession of every mind; it has invaded even the army, and, at the present moment, there is not a regulation that is not alleged to be obsolete.

“Most certainly, in the face of a war which appeared to be imminent, much better things might have been done than giving a free course to imprudent talk. The proper procedure, on the contrary, would have been to redouble our tokens of respect for those military institutions which, for the last half-century and on such various battle-fields, have produced for us such glorious successes.

“More of a really military spirit should have been shown, and a stop should have been put to all those projects of change which blunt and destroy the military faith of both officer and soldier in all that concerns the law, regulations, and the exercise of command. It has been rightly said that we only respect things so long as we think they are likely to be lasting, and that often there is but a step between the doubt as to the permanency of an institution and the disaffection which surrounds it.

“It is at the time of a crisis that it is most necessary to have confidence in oneself and to combine under the yoke of discipline, and not to yield to the temptation of

fruitless discussion or to allow oneself to wander in the obscurity of the future.

"At all events, it is not the time to let ourselves be led away by illusions of changes.

"Thus, instead of attacking all the provisions and all the consequences of the law of 1855, would it not have been better, following the experience which we have had of it, to seek out modifications which might be usefully applied to it, rather than demand its abrogation?

"Is there, in fact, any advantage whatever in marking out in the ranks of the troop a certain class of soldiers, and in casting a kind of reprobation on brave men who, loved and esteemed by their chiefs, have re-enlisted with bounty, and in doing that, have after all only acted in conformity with the law of their country?

"We sometimes evince a disposition to elevate ourselves above other nations; the present time is not the moment to be more modest than is right.

"What! can it be said that a nation like France, which in a few weeks can assemble under the colours 600,000 soldiers, who has in her arsenals 8000 pieces of field artillery, 1,800,000 muskets, and powder enough for a ten years' war, should not be always ready to maintain by arms her injured honour or her disregarded rights?

"Can it be said that the army is not ready to enter upon a campaign when she includes in her ranks the veterans of Africa, Sebastopol, and Solferino?—when she has to command them experienced generals and that crowd of young officers who have been prepared by expeditions to Algeria and the Mexican war for exercising high commands? What army is there in Europe which contains the like elements of experience and energy?

"Our infantry is not, as yet, entirely armed with the needle-gun. But, during former wars, have our *vol-tigeurs* ever been stopped in their advance either by the

Tyrolese sharpshooters armed with their rifled carbines, or by the English riflemen?

"Do we, then, need to call to mind the expression of Marshal Macdonald, speaking of the soldiers of Wagram, that we are not so well welded together one with the other, and that the bonds of the military hierarchy and of discipline are weakened in us?

"Oh, then, let us hasten to regain the military virtues of our fathers! That would be worth more to us than the needle-gun!

"MARSHAL RANDON."

Was it, then, necessary to undergo the trial of the greatest reverses for the real state of things to be made evident to every eye?

## CHAPTER II.

PROJECT OF THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON III. FOR THE FORMATION OF SEVERAL ARMIES, FROM 1867 TO 1868.

WHATEVER confidence the Emperor had in the capacity and patriotism of Marshal Randon, he did not share in the optimism of the latter. Thus, in 1867, he promptly made over the Ministry of War to Marshal Niel, who was convinced of the necessity of improving our military organization.

Marshal Niel found the legislative body disposed, to some extent, to afford to the Government the necessary means for placing our forces on a more respectable footing. A portion of that which had been done away with two years before was again established, and a vote was given for the funds indispensable for perfecting our system of arming, and for improving our fortifications and fortified towns.

At this epoch the Emperor, desiring to estimate personally the real state of our military resources, applied himself, with the help of General Lebrun, to a very minute study of all the elements necessary for the formation of several armies, in order to verify what we possessed and what we wanted. The Minister of War was to be charged with the task of completing, as promptly as possible, the deficiencies which were pointed out.

The work in question was divided into two parts, the first including twenty-four tabular statements, giving the composition of all the corps, the exact number of men,

of horses, and of carriages necessary for each company, squadron, and battery ; for every regiment, division, and brigade ; for each head-quarters and for each army-corps. These same calculations were applied to the formation of three great armies, having three *corps de réserve*—the imperial guard, an army-corps at Paris, and another at Lyons or Belfort. The second part, composed of several chapters, pointed out what the existing resources were, and what must indispensably be done in order to complete the formation of these armies, both in men and material.

When Marshal Niel received the Memoir, of which we only give the general results, he wrote to the Emperor the following letter :—

“SIRE,—I have just received ten copies of the important work to which your Majesty has applied yourself with so much perseverance. It will be very useful to us, and will serve as the rule for the improved constitution of our national forces. It is a very rare circumstance that a sovereign should have examined, so thoroughly ■ your Majesty has done, into all the elements of which armies are composed. I beg to congratulate your Majesty on this. I shall keep the copies under lock and key, and shall give them only to the directors-general of the Ministry.

“I am, &c.,

“MARSHAL NIEL,

“*Minister of War.*”



## COMPOSITION OF ARMIES.

## FIRST PART.

## CONSTITUTION OF THE DIFFERENT CORPS.

According to the Tables which were drawn up, the effectives of the various elements of which an army is formed, were settled in the following manner:—

EFFECTIVES OF	Men.	Horses.		Carriages.
		Saddle.	Draught and Pack Mules.	
A battalion of foot chasseurs . . . . .	938	6	5	3
A regiment of infantry . . . . .	2,785	19	14	11
A squadron of cavalry . . . . .	167	144	1	1
A cavalry regiment of 4 squadrons . . . . .	693	617	13	7
A cavalry regiment of 5 squadrons . . . . .	860	761	14	8
A field battery of 4-pounder guns . . . . .	154	36	85	19
A horse battery of 4-pounder guns . . . . .	161	94	85	19
A battery of bullet guns . . . . .	154	36	85	19
A field battery of 12-pounder guns . . . . .	201	36	133	23
A battery of mountain guns . . . . .	206	25	112	1
A company of sappers or miners of the engineers . . . . .	162	9	11	2
A mounted company of the train . . . . .	205	40	228	0
A light company of the train . . . . .	357	40	300	0
An infantry division of 2 brigades . . . . .	13,134	320	537	160
An infantry division of 3 brigades . . . . .	18,851	382	649	202
A brigade of cavalry of 2 regiments of the line . . . . .	1,535	1,274	110	36
A brigade of 2 regiments of light cavalry . . . . .	1,869	1,562	112	38
A brigade composed of 1 regiment of light cavalry and 1 regiment of the line . . . . .	1,702	1,418	111	37
A brigade of cavalry composed of 3 regiments of light cavalry . . . . .	2,763	2,326	145	50
A brigade of cavalry composed of 3 regiments of cavalry of the line . . . . .	2,262	1,894	142	47
A brigade of cavalry composed of 2 regiments of light cavalry and 1 regiment of the line . . . . .	2,596	2,182	144	49
A brigade composed of 2 regiments of the line and 1 regiment of light cavalry . . . . .	2,429	2,038	143	48
A division of cavalry of 2 brigades of regiments of the line . . . . .	3,371	2,753	392	113
A division composed of 1 brigade of cavalry of the line and 1 brigade of light cavalry . . . . .	3,705	3,041	394	115
A division composed of 2 brigades of light cavalry . . . . .	4,039	3,329	396	117
A division composed of 3 brigades of cavalry (1 regiment of light cavalry and 5 regiments of cavalry of the line ■ of the reserve) . . . . .	5,003	4,147	472	141

EFFECTIVES OF	Men.	Horses.		Carriages.
		Saddle.	Draught and Pack Mules.	
The chief head-quarters . . . . .	1,349	718	460	156
Head-quarters of an army-corps . . . . .	791	346	373	100
The reserve of an army-corps of 3 divisions, with pontoon-train . . . . .	2,767	586	2,076	436
The reserve of an army-corps of 3 divisions, without pontoon-train . . . . .	2,522	552	1,827	379
The reserve of an army-corps of 2 divisions, with pontoon-train . . . . .	2,479	550	1,754	367
The reserve of 2 army-corps of 2 divisions, without pontoon-train . . . . .	2,199	516	1,593	326
A reserve corps of cavalry of 2 divisions (1 division of light cavalry and 1 division of cavalry of the reserve) . . . . .	7,434	6,122	802	239
The general reserve of field artillery . . . . .	1,812	561	1,038	192
A grand park of field artillery for 3 army-corps . . . . .	1,949	275	1,715	341
A grand park of field artillery for an army of 2 army-corps . . . . .	1,776	249	1,473	284
The general reserve of administrative services . . . . .	900	111	556	124
A grand park of engineers . . . . .	451	62	373	60
A siege-train of artillery . . . . .	4,449	456	2,910	643

## FORMATION OF ARMIES.

By means of the existing resources 3 armies might be formed, divided into 3 army-corps, as well as 2 army-corps of reserve, without reckoning the imperial guard and the troops intended for Algeria.

## 1ST ARMY (comprising 3 Army-corps, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd).

	Men.	Horses.		Carriages.
		Saddle.	Draught and Pack.	
Chief head-quarters . . . . .	1,349	718	460	157
1st Corps { Head-quarters . . . . .	791	346	373	100
{ 2 divisions of infantry (of 2 brigades) . . . . .	26,268	640	1,074	320
{ 1 brigade of cavalry (of 3 regiments) . . . . .	2,595	2,182	144	49
{ Reserve of the corps <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	2,479	550	1,754	367
Total . . . . .	32,134	3,718	3,345	836

<sup>1</sup> This reserve is provided with a pontoon-train.

		Men.	Horses.		Carriages.
			Saddle.	Draught and Pack.	
2nd Corps.	Head-quarters . . . . .	791	346	373	100
	2 divisions of infantry (of 2 brigades) . . . . .	26,268	640	1,074	320
	1 division of infantry (of 3 brigades) . . . . .	18,851	382	649	202
	2 brigades of cavalry (of 2 regiments) . . . . .	3,070	2,548	220	72
	Reserve of the corps <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	2,522	552	1,827	379
Total . . . . .		51,502	4,468	4,143	1,073
3rd Corps.	Head-quarters . . . . .	791	346	373	100
	2 divisions of infantry (of 2 brigades) . . . . .	26,268	640	1,074	320
	1 brigade of cavalry (of 3 regiments) . . . . .	2,596	2,182	144	49
	Reserve of the corps <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	2,479	550	1,754	367
	Total . . . . .	32,134	3,718	3,345	836
General Reserve of the Army.	Corps of cavalry . . . . .	7,434	6,122	802	239
	General reserve of field artillery and general direction of parks of artillery . . . . .	1,812	561	1,038	192
	Grand park of field artillery . . . . .	1,949	275	1,715	341
	Administrative reserves . . . . .	900	111	556	124
	Grand park of engineers . . . . .	451	62	373	60
Total . . . . .		12,546	7,131	4,484	947
General Total of the 1st Army		129,665	19,753	15,777	3,858

This army is composed of 7 divisions of infantry, 6 of 2 brigades, and 1 of 3 brigades; of 1 brigades of cavalry of 3 regiments, and of 1 brigades of cavalry of 2 regiments; of a corps of cavalry reserve of 2 divisions, and of 52 batteries of artillery, viz. :—

3 batteries per division of infantry,  $3 \times 7 = 21$  field batteries.

2 batteries per division of cavalry,  $2 \times 1 = 4$  horse batteries.

3 reserves of artillery of the army-corps,  $3 \times 6 = 18$  batteries, 6 of which are horse batteries.

General reserves of artillery, 9 batteries, 5 of which are field batteries, 3 horse batteries, and 1 mountain battery.

Total 52 batteries, 13 of which are horse batteries.

<sup>1</sup> This reserve is not provided with a pontoon-train.

<sup>2</sup> This reserve is provided with a pontoon-train.

## 2nd ARMY (3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th army-corps).

	Men.	Horses.		Carriages.
		Saddle.	Draught (d Pack.	
Chief head-quarters . . . . .	1,349	718	460	157
1st Corps. {				
Head-quarters . . . . .	791	346	373	100
2 divisions of infantry (of 2 brigades)	26,268	640	1,074	320
1 brigade of cavalry (of 3 regiments)	2,596	2,182	144	49
Reserve of the corps <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	2,479	550	1,754	367
Total . . . . .	32,134	3,718	3,345	836
2nd Corps. {				
Head-quarters . . . . .	791	346	373	100
3 divisions of infantry (of 2 brigades)	39,402	960	1,611	480
1 brigade of cavalry (of 3 regiments)	2,763	2,326	145	50
Reserve of the corps <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	2,522	552	1,827	379
Total . . . . .	45,478	4,184	3,956	1,009
3rd Corps. {				
Head-quarters . . . . .	791	346	373	100
2 divisions of infantry (of 2 brigades)	26,268	640	1,074	320
1 brigade of cavalry (of 3 regiments)	2,429	2,038	143	48
Reserve of the corps <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	2,479	550	1,754	367
Total . . . . .	31,967	3,574	3,344	835
General Reserves of the Army. {				
Division of cavalry (of 3 brigades)	5,003	4,147	472	141
General reserve of field artillery and general direction of parks of artillery . . . . .	1,660	525	953	173
Grand park of field artillery . . . . .	1,949	275	1,715	341
Administrative reserves . . . . .	900	111	556	124
Grand park of engineers . . . . .	451	62	373	60
Total . . . . .	9,963	5,120	4,069	839
General Total of the 2nd army	120,891	17,314	15,174	3,676

This 2nd army is composed of 7 divisions of infantry of 2 brigades, of 3 brigades of cavalry of 3 regiments, of 1 division of cavalry of 3 brigades in reserve, and of 49 batteries, viz. :—

3 batteries per division of infantry,  $3 \times 7 = 21$  field batteries.

2 batteries for the division of cavalry, 2 horse batteries.

<sup>1</sup> This reserve is provided with a pontoon-train.

<sup>2</sup> This reserve is not provided with a pontoon-train.

<sup>3</sup> This reserve is provided with a pontoon-train.

3 reserves of artillery of the army-corps,  $3 \times 6 = 18$  batteries, 6 of which are horse batteries.

General reserves of artillery, 8 batteries, 4 of which are field batteries, 3 horse batteries, and 1 mountain battery.

Total 49 batteries, 11 of which are horse batteries.

3rd ARMY—ARMY OF RESERVE (7th and 8th corps).

	Men.	Horses.		Carriages.
		Saddle.	Draught and Pack.	
Chief head-quarters . . . . .	1,349	718	460	157
1st Corps. { Head-quarters <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	958	490	374	101
{ 3 divisions of infantry (of 2 brigades)	39,402	960	1,611	480
{ 1 brigade of cavalry (of 2 regiments)	3,404	2,836	222	74
{ Reserve of the corps <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	2,767	586	2,076	436
Total . . . . .	46,531	4,872	4,283	1,091
2nd Corps. { Head-quarters . . . . .	791	346	373	100
{ 2 divisions of infantry (of 2 brigades)	26,268	640	1,074	320
{ 1 brigade of cavalry (of 3 regiments)	2,429	2,038	143	48
{ Reserve of the corps <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	2,199	516	1,593	326
Total . . . . .	31,687	3,540	3,183	794
General Reserves of the Army. <sup>4</sup> { Division of cavalry (of 2 brigades)	3,371	2,753	392	113
{ General reserve of field artillery and general direction of parks of artillery . . . . .	1,499	431	868	154
{ Grand park of engineers . . . . .	1,776	249	1,473	284
{ Administrative reserves . . . . .	900	111	556	124
Total . . . . .	7,546	3,544	3,289	675
General Total of the 3rd Army	87,113	12,674	11,215	2,717

This 3rd army includes 5 divisions of infantry of 2 brigades, 2 brigades of cavalry of 3 regiments, 1 division of cavalry of 1 brigade in reserve, and 36 batteries of artillery, viz. :—

3 batteries per division of infantry,  $5 \times 3 = 15$  field batteries.

<sup>1</sup> The head-quarters is provided with two squadrons of cavalry in place of one, for escort service.

<sup>2</sup> This reserve is provided with a pontoon-train.

<sup>3</sup> This reserve is not provided with a pontoon-train.

<sup>4</sup> The general reserves of the 3rd army do not include the grand park of engineers.



■ batteries for the division of cavalry, 2 horse batteries.

2 reserves of artillery of army-corps,  $6 \times 2 = 12$  batteries, 4 of which are horse batteries.

General reserves of artillery, 7 batteries, 4 of which are field batteries, 2 horse batteries, and ■ mountain battery.

Total 36 batteries, 8 of which are horse batteries.

**ARMY CORPS OF BELFORT (9th corps).**

	Men.	Horses.		Carriages.
		Saddle.	Draught and Pack.	
Head-quarters <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	428	189	309	89
2 divisions of infantry of 2 brigades .	24,084	556	894	276
■ brigade of cavalry of 2 regiments .	1,535	1,274	110	36
Total of the army-corps of Belfort .	26,047	2,019	1,313	401

The 2 infantry divisions of the 9th corps have no battalions of chasseurs. Each division has only 2 batteries of field guns, and no battery of mitrailleuses or bullet-guns. The army-corps has no reserves. The artillery is therefore composed of only 4 field batteries of four-pounder guns.

**RESERVE CORPS OF PARIS (10th corps).**

	Men.	Horses.		Carriages.
		Saddle.	Draught and Pack.	
Head-quarters <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	428	189	309	89
3 divisions of infantry of 2 brigades .	37,064	840	1,346	417
■ brigade of cavalry of 2 regiments .	1,869	1,562	112	38
Total of the army-corps of Paris .	39,361	2,591	1,767	544

One only of the 3 divisions of the 10th corps contains 1 battalion of chasseurs. Each division has only 2 batteries of field guns, and no battery of mitrailleuses or bullet-guns. The army-corps has no reserves. The artillery is therefore composed of only 6 field batteries of 4-pounder guns.

<sup>1</sup> The numbers of the head-quarters of this army-corps differ from those of the eight first corps, because the escort squadron which is to be taken from the brigade is not included, and because it possesses neither company nor detachment of sappers of the engineers.

ALGERIAN TROOPS.		Men.
Staff. (General Officers.—Staff-corps.—Staff of fortified places —Interpreters.—Staff of artillery-parks.—Penitentiary establishments) . . . . .		414
9 regiments of infantry, including the foreign regiment . . . . .		25,541
3 battalions of light infantry . . . . .		3,000
3 regiments of spahis . . . . .		3,291
3 regiments of French cavalry of 6 squadrons and dépôts . . . . .		3,150
3 battalions of zouaves and dépôts . . . . .		3,066
3 battalions of sharpshooters and dépôts . . . . .		4,039
Discipline companies . . . . .		1,646
■ squadrons of chasseurs d'Afrique and dépôt <sup>1</sup> . . . . .		1,868
Men for the remounting department, and veterinary surgeons . . . . .		804
Artillery : staff, six batteries, detachments of workmen, artificers, gunsmiths, and pontooncers . . . . .		2,603
Engineers : staff and troops . . . . .		1,097
Administration (commissariat officers, officers of the administration and troops) . . . . .		2,420
Military train : three dépôts and twelve provisional companies . . . . .		1,380
Total <sup>1</sup> . . . . .		<u>54,321</u>

## RECAPITULATION OF THE ARTILLERY OF THE LINE.

1st army . . . . .	52 batteries . . . . .	13 of which are horse batteries, and 1 mountain battery.
2nd army . . . . .	49 batteries . . . . .	11 of which are horse batteries, and 1 mountain battery.
3rd army . . . . .	36 batteries . . . . .	8 of which are horse batteries, and 1 mountain battery.
9th corps . . . . .	4 field batteries.	
10th corps . . . . .	■ field batteries.	
Total . . . . .	147 batteries . . . . .	32 of which are horse batteries, and 3 mountain batteries.
Algeria . . . . .	6 field batteries.	
Total . . . . .	153 batteries, or 918 pieces of ordnance.	

<sup>1</sup> It is here supposed that each regiment of chasseurs d'Afrique would leave two squadrons at its dépôt. If, as was shown in the composition of the 1st army, each regiment ought to leave one squadron only at the dépôt, the sum-total of the effective troops in Algeria would be diminished by 668, and reduced from 54,319 to 53,651.

## DISTRIBUTION OF CAVALRY OF THE LINE.

	Number of Divisions of Infantry of the Army-corps.	Cuirassiers.	Dragoons.	Lancers.	Chasseurs and Hussars.	Spahis.	Total.
Escorts to be supplied to the head- quarters and staffs of 3 armies, 1 regiment to each army <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
Reserve of the 1st army . . . . .	—	4	—	—	4	—	8
Reserve of the 2nd army . . . . .	—	3	1	1	1	—	6
Reserve of the 3rd army . . . . .	—	2	1	1	—	—	4
1st army. { 1st corps . . . . .	2	—	—	1	2	—	3
{ 2nd corps . . . . .	3	—	2	2	—	—	4
{ 3rd corps . . . . .	2	—	1	—	2	—	3
2nd army. { 1st corps . . . . .	2	—	1	—	2	—	3
{ 2nd corps . . . . .	3	—	—	—	3	—	3
{ 3rd corps . . . . .	2	—	1	1	1	—	3
3rd army. { 1st corps . . . . .	3	—	1	1	2	—	4
{ 2nd corps . . . . .	2	—	1	1	1	—	3
9th corps (Lyons and Belfort) . . . . .	2	1	1	—	—	—	2
10th corps (Paris) . . . . .	3	—	2	—	—	—	2
Algeria . . . . .	—	—	—	—	3	3	6
Total . . . . .	24	10	12	8	24	3	57

IMPERIAL GUARD.	Men.	Horses.		Carriages.
		Saddle.	Draught and Pack.	
Head-quarters <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	428	189	309	89
1st division of infantry (13 battalions) . . . . .	13,134	320	537	160
2nd division of infantry (11 battalions) <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	11,289	311	528	154
1 division of cavalry of 3 brigades (30 squadrons) . . . . .	5,838	4,867	477	146
Reserves of the guard <sup>4</sup> . . . . .	1,891	444	1,423	288
Total . . . . .	32,580	6,131	3,274	837

<sup>1</sup> The regiment of light cavalry appropriated to each army for escort service will be mounted ■ French horses. Two squadrons will be allotted to the chief head-quarters, and ■ squadron to the head-quarters of each army-corps. Nevertheless, in the 3rd army, which only consists of two army-corps, the head-quarters of the 1st corps will have two squadrons instead of one.

<sup>2</sup> The numbers of this head-quarters differ from those of the head-quarters of the corps of the three armies, because the escort squadron which will be taken from the division of cavalry of the guard is not included, and because also it possesses neither companies nor detachments of sappers of the engineers.

<sup>3</sup> This battalion does not possess ■ battalion of foot-chasseurs.

<sup>4</sup> Of the same composition as the reserve of an army-corps of troops ■

## RECAPITULATION ■ THE DIFFERENT CORPS.

	Men.	Horses.		Carriages.
		Saddle.	Draught and Pack.	
1st army . . . . .	129,665	19,753	15,777	3,858
2nd army . . . . .	120,891	17,314	15,174	3,676
3rd army . . . . .	87,113	12,674	11,215	2,717
Corps of Belfort . . . . .	26,047	2,019	1,313	401
Corps of Paris . . . . .	39,361	2,591	1,767	544
Imperial guard . . . . .	32,580	6,131	3,274	837
Total . . . . .	435,657	60,482	48,520	12,033
		Horses or Mules.		
		109,002		
Algerian troops . . . . .	54,321	12,216		
General Total . . . . .	489,978	121,218		12,033

## EFFECTIVE OF THE ARMY ON THE WAR ESTABLISHMENT.

	Men.
Active army <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	489,978
Staff at home (general officers in the service and staff not employed in the imperial armies) . . . . .	■
9 depôts of infantry of the guard <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	■,579
6 depôts of cavalry of the guard <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	1,884
2 depôts of 2 regiments of artillery of the guard . . . . .	529
100 depôts of infantry, of 1022 men each (officers included) . . . . .	102,200
20 depôts of foot chasseurs, 518 men each (officers included) . . . . .	■,200
51 depôts of cavalry, of 314 ■■■■ each (officers included) . . . . .	16,014
20 depôts of regiments of artillery . . . . .	10,520
■ companies of workmen (depôts) <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	50
6 companies of artificers (depôts) <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	50
1 company of gunsmiths (depôt) <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	20
2 regiments of artillery train (depôt) . . . . .	1,110

the line of 2 divisions without a pontoon-train, with this difference, viz. that the reserve of field artillery comprises only 4 batteries, ■ horse batteries, and 2 batteries of 12-pounder guns, drawn by the regiment of horse artillery of the guard.

<sup>1</sup> This number does not include the siege trains, which are separate from the reserves.

<sup>2</sup> The depôts of the guard will be during war fed with men taken from the reserves.

<sup>3</sup> The principal part are employed in the armies.

	Men.
3 dépôts of the regiments of engineers, and companies of workmen of engineers . . . . .	3,589
Gendarmes, including the regiment of the imperial guard and the guard of Paris . . . . .	24,412
Staff of places in the interior . . . . .	837
Military schools (Staff, Metz, Saumur, Polytechnique, Saint Cyr, and the Military Prytaneum) . . . . .	1,152
Cavalry of the riding-schools and remounting department . . . . .	2,163
Veterans . . . . .	300
Hospital orderlies (of the interior) . . . . .	1,500
Commissariat, hospital surgeons, officers of the administrative services, chaplains (of the interior) . . . . .	800
Military train of the interior (8 provisional companies and 3 dépôts of squadrons, including the guard) . . . . .	935
Workmen of the administration (of the interior) . . . . .	1,200
Firemen . . . . .	1,572
Total . . . . .	<u>673,796<sup>1</sup></u>

An army of this size requires in time of peace the following effective :—

EFFECTIVE OF THE ARMY ON THE PEACE ESTABLISHMENT.

	Men.	Horses or Mules.
Staff . . . . .	4,715	522
The household of the Emperor . . . . .	357	320
Imperial Guard { Infantry { 7 regiments . . . . . 14,973 { 1 regiment of zouaves . . . . . 1,388 { 1 battalion of foot chasseurs . . . . . 996 Cavalry . 6 regiments . . . . . 5,904 Artillery { 1st regiment . . . . . 1,137 { Horse regiment . . . . . 1,137 { Squadron of artillery train . . . . . 159 Military Train . . . . . 650	17,357	— 4,494 762 862 164 650
Total of the imperial guard . . . . .	26,344	6,932

<sup>1</sup> On the 1st of July, 1868, the total effective of the army on the war establishment might exceed this figure of 673,976, for to this would have to be added the available surplus accruing from the class summoned at this date, that is 20,000 men. The total effective thus increased amounts to 693,794 men. In the figure 673,796 it has not been deemed expedient to include the permanent body employed in the fixed establishments of the artillery and of the engineers, arsenals, foundries, central dépôts, manufactories of arms, and directions, any more than that employed in the regimental establishments of these four branches of the service.



## EFFECTIVE OF THE ARMY ON THE PEACE ESTABLISHMENT.

		Men.	Horses or Mules.
Infantry.	100 regiments, 94 of 2000 men, and 6 for Africa of 2300 men . . . . .	201,800	—
	3 regiments of zouaves of 3600 men . . . . .	10,800	—
	19 battalions of foot chasseurs of 800 men, 1 in Africa of 900 men . . . . .	16,100	—
	3 battalions of light infantry . . . . .	3,000	—
	Foreign legion . . . . .	3,000	—
	3 regiments of native sharp-shooters . . . . .	10,500	—
	7 discipline companies . . . . .	1,050	—
	1 company of veteran non-commissioned officers . . . . .	100	—
	1 company of veteran riflemen . . . . .	200	—
	Total of infantry of the line . . . . .		246,550
Cavalry.	30 regiments of 5 squadrons . . . . .	24,090	18,720
	18 regiments of 6 squadrons . . . . .	17,244	13,482
	4 regiments of chasseurs d'Afrique . . . . .	4,496	3,552
	2 regiments of chasseurs (Algeria) . . . . .	2,036	1,712
	3 regiments of spahis . . . . .	3,489	3,462
	Horsemen of the re-mounting department Schools . . . . .	2,967 242	84 1,126
	Total of cavalry of the line . . . . .		54,564
Artillery.	15 field regiments of 1500 men . . . . .	23,430	12,015
	1 regiment of pontooneers . . . . .	1,570	113
	4 horse regiments . . . . .	4,580	3,500
	10 companies of workmen . . . . .	1,540	—
	6 companies of artificers . . . . .	624	—
	1 company of gun-smiths . . . . .	104	—
	Augmentation for Algeria . . . . .	500	500
	2 regiments of artillery train . . . . .	1,716	1,184
Total of artillery of the line . . . . .		34,064	17,312
Engineers.	1 regiments of 2160 men each . . . . .	6,480	699
	Companies of workmen . . . . .	224	—
Total of engineers . . . . .		6,704	699
Troops of the Admi- nistration.	Military train . . . . .	8,304	7,060
	Writing clerks . . . . .	550	—
	Hospital orderlies . . . . .	4,700	—
	Workmen of the administration . . . . .	3,600	—
	Chaplains, surgeons, officers of the ad- ministration . . . . .	2,011	160
	Total of troops of the administration . . . . .		19,165
Gendarmes, including the regiment of the guard . . . . .		21,556	13,897
General total . . . . .		414,019	89,442

<sup>1</sup> Officers' horses.

## SECOND PART.

## EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTIVES AND OF THE DEFICIENCIES.

I. *Infantry*.—Exclusive of the imperial guard, the above-mentioned army-corps are composed of the following elements:—10 army-corps comprising 24 divisions, 49 brigades, or 98 regiments of the line, and 20 battalions of foot chasseurs. If to these are added the 9 regiments intended for Algeria, we shall have 107 regiments, which is the number of our infantry regiments, including the 3 regiments of zouaves, the 3 regiments of Algerian sharpshooters, and the foreign regiment,

In order to bring the effectives of the corps of infantry of the line up to the numbers stated in the foregoing tables; in order to make up the dépôts of the regiments of infantry of the line to 1000 soldiers, and those of the battalions of foot chasseurs to 500; in order, likewise, to bring the effectives of the corps of infantry of the guard up to the same figures, and to make up the dépôts of these corps to about 300 men for each infantry regiment and 180 for the battalion, it would be requisite to introduce into the infantry of the army (line and guard) altogether 200,337 men.

As a matter of fact, the infantry of the army numbers at this time, the guard and line together, a present effective of 266,235 men; it ought to number on the war establishment 466,572 men.

Now the reserves of the army for the infantry service represent at the present time an amount of 129,544 men. In passing from a peace establishment to a war establishment the deficiency would therefore be 70,793 men.

II. *Cavalry*.—The 10 army-corps of the line employ 51 regiments of cavalry, forming 4 divisions and 12 brigades. If we take account of the 3 regiments of

French cavalry and the 3 regiments of spahis necessary in Algeria during ■ war which would have to be carried on in Europe, we find the number of 57 regiments of the line, a number which actually represents that of our regiments of this branch of the service, and the number of 63 regiments, if we add the 6 regiments which form a part of the imperial guard.

In order to organize the armies in Europe with the effectives of cavalry determined in the tables ; in order to make up the depôts of the 57 regiments employed in the 10 army-corps of the line and that of the guard to 300 men each ; in order to maintain the present effectives of the 3 regiments of spahis, and to complete those of three regiments of French light cavalry intended for Algeria ; in order, finally, to leave a sufficient body of men in the cavalry establishments (schools and remounting department), there would be required in all 68,025 men. Now the effective of cavalry serving under the colours is at the present time 55,340.<sup>1</sup> The men of

<sup>1</sup> The effective of the cavalry service in troopers is, at the present time, 55,840. It should be, according to the number fixed for the peace establishment, 56,880 men.

There is, therefore, at this very moment, a deficiency of 1540 men.

The men belonging to the cavalry who are reckoned in the reserves amount to the number of 18,500. If we deduct 1540 men from this reserve, ■ shall have in the ranks . . . . . 56,880 men  
and in the reserve . . . . . 16,960

Total . . . . . 73,840 ■

instantly available for the cavalry.

In order to organize the armies in Europe with the effectives of cavalry fixed in the foregoing tables, ■ would be required ■ follows :—

	Men.
For the 6 regiments of the guard, of 5 squadrons per regiment (30 squad.) . . . . .	3,800
For 10 regiments of cuirassiers, of 4 squadrons per regiment (40 squad.) . . . . .	6,400
For 12 regiments of dragoons, of 4 squadrons per regiment (48 squad.) . . . . .	7,680
For ■ regiments of lancers, of 4 squadrons per regiment (32 squad.) . . . . .	

this branch of the service who are reckoned in the reserves are 18,500 in number. The number of men in this branch of the service instantly available is, therefore, 73,840.

The number of men requisite being 68,025, there is a surplus of our resources beyond our needs of 5816 men. This surplus might, in case of absolute necessity, be drafted into the military train or into the artillery.

With regard to horses, the regiments and cavalry establishments (including the guard) have 40,662 at disposal at the present time.<sup>1</sup>

	Men.
For 17 regiments of light cavalry, of 5 squadrons per regiment (85 squadr.) . . . . .	13,600
For 4 regiments of chasseurs d'Afrique, of 5 squadrons per regiment (20 squadr.) . . . . .	3,200
For the 57 regiments as above, 12 men per regiment counting for the regimental staff . . . . .	684

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Total for the 57 regiments employed in the armies . . . 40,484

For the corps left in Algeria as follows :—

3 regiments of spahis . . . . .	3,291
3 regiments of French light cavalry, of 1050 men per regiment, including the dépôts of 275 men . . . . .	3,150
For the 57 dépôts of regiments employed in the armies, of 300 men per dépôt . . . . .	17,100
For the remounting departments (France and Algeria) . . . . .	3,500
For the schools . . . . .	500

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Total in the armies at home and in Algeria . . . 68,025

Now we have at present at our disposal for the cavalry branch of the service 73,841 men. There is, therefore, an available surplus of 5816 men.

Under these circumstances all the squadrons employed in the armies might reckon 160 men of the effective ; each regiment forming a part of these armies might have 300 ■ at its dépôt ; and, lastly, each of the 3 regiments of French light cavalry left in Algeria would reckon 1050 men, including ■ dépôt of 275 men.

<sup>1</sup> At the present time we have in the cavalry, troop-horses as follows :—

	Troop-horses.
In the imperial guard . . . . .	3,960
In the 10 regiments of cuirassiers (dépôts included) . . . . .	5,500

For raising the war squadrons of the regiments employed in the army-corps to the number of effectives fixed in the tables ; for the second horses to be supplied at the time of mobilization to the lieutenants and sub-lieutenants ; for the 3 regiments of spahis and the 3 French regiments intended to be employed in Algeria, and for the schools, there would altogether be required at the time of placing the army upon a war establish-

	Troop-horses.
In the 12 regiments of dragoons (depôts included) . . . . .	6,600
In the 8 regiments of lancers (depôts included) . . . . .	4,400
In the 17 regiments of light cavalry intended to enter the armies in Europe (depôts included) . . . . .	11,200
In the 4 regiments of chasseurs d'Afrique (depôts included) . . . . .	2,880
In the 2 regiments of chasseurs which are in Algeria (depôts included) . . . . .	1,400
In the regiment of light cavalry intended to go to Algeria, in order to be there during war (depôts included) . . . . .	700
In the three regiments of spahis . . . . .	2,991
In the schools . . . . .	1,031
Total of horses now at disposal in the regiments and cavalry establishments . . . . .	<u>40,662</u>

For the armies it is necessary, according to the bases fixed in the project, to have troop-horses as follows :—

	Troop-horses.
For the guard, 6 regiments of 5 squadrons, 130 troop-horses per squadron . . . . .	3,900
For 10 regiments of cuirassiers, 40 squadrons, ditto . . . . .	5,200
For 12 regiments of dragoons, 48 squadrons, ditto . . . . .	6,240
For 8 regiments of lancers, 32 squadrons, ditto . . . . .	4,160
For 17 regiments of light cavalry, 85 squadrons, ditto . . . . .	11,050
For 4 regiments of chasseurs d'Afrique, 20 squadrons, ditto . . . . .	2,600
For the 57 staffs of the foregoing regiments, of 12 per regiment . . . . .	684
For the ■ regiments of chasseurs which are in Algeria (depôts included) . . . . .	1,400
For the regiment of light cavalry to be sent to Algeria, ditto . . . . .	700
For the 3 regiments of spahis, ditto . . . . .	2,991
For the schools . . . . .	1,031
For the 2nd horses to be given to the lieutenants and sub- lieutenants of the 57 regiments . . . . .	1,415
Total of horses necessary at the time of passing from the peace establishment to the war establishment . . . . .	<u>41,371</u>



ment 41,371 horses. The present resources being 40,662,<sup>1</sup> there is, therefore, a deficiency of 709 horses.

This deficiency of 709 horses might, strictly speaking, be covered by the horses of the regiment of cavalry to be sent to Algeria, but it must be supposed that these horses would be used for remounting the officers without any troop. Moreover, to make up the dépôts of the 57 regiments forming part of the army-corps in Europe to the minimum number of 100 horses, it would be necessary, at the time of mobilization, to procure by direct purchase in the trade 5700 horses beyond the 709 mentioned above. The total of troop-horses wanting for the cavalry is, therefore, 6409. In case of absolute necessity these horses could be supplied by the gendarmery.

III. *Artillery.*—The artillery for the army-corps (not including that of the guard) is composed of 147 batteries, 32 batteries of horse-artillery, and 3 mountain batteries. By adding the 6 batteries of field artillery deemed necessary for Algeria, we have a total of 153 batteries. Now the 14 regiments of field artillery stationed in France might give us, at the rate of 8 batteries per regiment, 112 batteries of field artillery; the 4 horse regiments, 32 batteries of horse artillery; the regiment which is in Algeria, 3 mountain batteries, besides the 6 batteries of field artillery which must remain in Algeria. Thus, then, we get the 147 batteries necessary for the active armies. It would be necessary to create only one battery per horse regiment in order to form the dépôts of the 4 regiments; but it would be requisite to draw upon the reserves of the army in order to complete the effectives of the batteries placed upon a war establishment.

For the artillery train we have reckoned, in the 10

<sup>1</sup> All the youngest horses ■ have at the present time in our cavalry corps are liable to be reckoned in this number.

army-corps of the line, 64 companies, 52 of which are distributed among the armies and army-corps, and 12 are appropriated to a siege train. We have at present 24 companies, forming 2 regiments; 4 of these companies are employed in Algeria. The question of dividing each of these 24 companies into three, with the view of obtaining the number of companies necessary for the armies, both in Algeria and at home, is now being considered. It is expedient to investigate how the existing resources of the army reserves would be able to furnish the sub-officers, corporals, and soldiers indispensable for raising to a war complement the cadres and effectives of these trisected companies.

We have reckoned 5 pontoon-trains belonging to the army-corps (divisible boats) distributed as follows:— 1 train to the reserve of each of the 1st and 3rd corps of the 1st and 2nd army, and 1 train to the reserve of the 1st corps of the 3rd army; also 3 reserve pontoon-trains to the general reserve of each of the 3 armies. These 8 pontoon-trains would employ eight companies of pontooneers. The regiment of pontooneers contains 14 companies. There remain, therefore, 6 companies available for the formation of new trains, if it should be considered necessary.

At this moment, the artillery counts present in the various corps 32,374 men; absent by leave on some score or other and liable to be recalled immediately, 5451 men; altogether 37,825 embodied soldiers. The men reckoned in the reserves of the army who belong to the artillery are 18,968 in number. The number of men in this branch of the service instantly available is therefore 56,793.

Now, to organize the artillery in the armies in Europe in conformity to the foregoing tables; to leave, as a *depôt*, in each of the regiments of artillery, an effective of ■ battery; to leave in the batteries and companies

of the artillery-train employed in Algeria, a sufficient number of men, there would be required altogether 57,498 men.

The number of men available at the present time being 56,793, there is therefore a deficiency of 705 men.

As far as regards horses, the artillery has at present available in the corps 5819 saddle-horses. At the time of the mobilization of the army, in order to insure all that would be needed for the armies at home and in Algeria, there would be required altogether 8776. There is, therefore, as regards the artillery, a deficiency of 2957 saddle-horses.

Of draught-horses, the artillery counts at this very day 12,793 horses in the corps, and 11,154 with the agriculturists ; altogether 23,747 draught horses at our immediate disposal.

At the moment of passing to a war establishment, there would be required for supplying all needs 33,260 horses. There is therefore a deficiency of 9313 draught-horses.

Lastly, there would also be required 780 mules for the artillery. There are none at the present time.

IV. *Engineers.* The engineers are distributed as follows among the 10 army-corps of the line, that of the guard, and of Algeria, viz. :—

	Companies.
1st Army.—To the chief head-quarters . . .	2
To each of the 3 head-quarters of the army-	
corps, 1 company . . . . .	3
To each of the 7 divisions of infantry, 1	
company . . . . .	7
To the general reserve of the army with the	
grand park of engineers, 1 company . . .	1
2nd Army.—To the chief head-quarters . .	13

	Companies.
3rd Army. — To the chief head-quarters . . . . . 2	9
To the head-quarters of each of the 2 army-corps, 1 company . . . . . 2	
To the 5 divisions of infantry . . . . . 5	
Army-corps of Lyons and Belfort, to 2 divisions of infantry . . . . . 2	
Army-corps of Paris, to 3 divisions of infantry . . . . . 3	
Imperial guard, to 2 divisions of infantry . . . . . 2	
In Algeria . . . . . 6	
General Total . . . . .	<u>48</u>

The present resources of the 3 regiments of engineers added to 2619 men in this branch of the service available at the present time in the reserves of the army, would be sufficient to allow of giving to the different detachments of engineers employed in the armies the effectives fixed in the tables, to insure the service needed at home and in Algeria, and to make up the dépôts remaining in France to 1170 men per regiment.

As far as regards the draught-horses necessary for the engineering service, the resources of this branch are composed of 175 horses per regiment, 75 to the principal portion of each, and 100 in Algeria; altogether 525 horses. Supposing that these numbers might be reduced by one half in France and Algeria, at the moment of going upon a war establishment, we might then have at our disposal 260 horses for the parks and companies of engineers which figure in the tables.

Now, the 48 companies employed in the armies, the 2 great parks of the army and the 8 parks of army-corps, require a total of 1568 draught-horses, 540 saddle-horses, and 96 pack-horses or mules, which must be supplied at the time of mobilization.

The engineers therefore need, after deducting the 260

draught-horses which are at our disposal at the present time, 1308 draught-horses, 540 saddle-horses, and 96 pack-horses or mules.

V. *Military Train.* The 3 armies and the 2 corps of Paris and Lyons require 45 mounted companies of the military train and 12 light companies. The guard would require 3 mounted companies and 1 light company. In consequence of the division effected on the 1st of January, 1868, we might have immediately at our disposal 48 companies of the line and 5 of the imperial guard, all of whom are going to be instructed both for the service of the mounted train and also for that of the light train.

At the time when the army is put upon a war establishment, each of the 48 companies of the line would leave at the dépôt of the squadron 1 officer, lieutenant or sub-lieutenant, which would thus enable us to have at our disposal 48 officers for the 5 squadrons of the line, by means of which we could immediately constitute 24 provisional companies with 2 officers per company, the effectives of which, consisting of non-commissioned officers, corporals, and men, would be drawn from the reserves of the army. In the squadron of the train of the imperial guard, there would also be left at the dépôt 3 lieutenants and 3 sub-lieutenants, requisite for forming, by the same means, 3 other provisional companies. We should thus have 27 provisional companies, 7 of which, immediately after they had been formed, would be despatched to the armies and the army-corps of Paris and Lyons, so as to complete the number of 57 companies, which is indispensable. The 20 other companies would be left at the dépôts of the squadrons. It would be useful at present to study the resources which might be afforded by the reserves of the army in order to make up the complement, in sub-officers, corporals, and men, of the effectives on a war footing of 48 companies of the line, of the 6 companies



at present existing, and of 27 provisional companies to be formed at the time of mobilization. The 45 mounted companies and the 12 light companies necessary for the armies and the corps of Lyons and Paris, and the 3 mounted companies and the light company necessary for the imperial guard, require on a war establishment 14,238 men (sub-officers, corporals and soldiers); 2440 saddle-horses; 10,944 draught-horses and 3901 mules. The present resources both in the squadrons of France and Algeria and in that of the guard, are 8000 men, 1120 saddle-horses, 2920 draught-horses, and 3800 mules (the latter in Algeria).

There is, therefore, wanting, merely to supply the needs of the active armies, 5238 men, 1320 saddle-horses and 8000 draught-horses.

In order to make up the 6 supernumerary platoons of 6 squadrons (including the guard) to 45 men per squadron, and the 20 provisional companies remaining in the depôts to 100 men per company, there would be required in addition 2270 men, 320 saddle-horses, and 2000 draught-horses (16 saddle-horses and 100 draught-horses per company).

There is therefore wanting altogether, in order to supply all the requirements in France, of the armies, and in Algeria, 8508 men. The reserves of the army contain 4800 men of the train; the deficiency is therefore 3700 men.

As regards the horses, the whole deficiency, if every requirement was satisfied, would be 1640 saddle-horses, and 10,000 draught-horses.

The military train possesses at this time 981 mules kept by the farmers. These 981 mules would have to be deducted from those it would be necessary to bring over from Algeria, or from the 10,000 draught-horses forming the deficiency pointed out above as regards the organization of the armies in Europe.

We must not lose sight of the fact that if any auxiliary train with the armies is to be organized, it must be placed in the hands of officers of the regular train. In order to satisfy this necessity, it would probably be thought indispensable to create one additional officer per company of the regular train at the time of going on to a war establishment. It may be admitted that a fourth officer per company might undertake the organization and direction of a detachment of the auxiliary train, including from 70 to 80 requisition carriages. The 61 companies employed in the armies and in the imperial guard would thus render it possible to have an auxiliary train of about 4300 carriages ; each of the companies would have to afford, as coadjutors to the officer who commanded a detachment of the auxiliary train, 1 sub-officer, 2 corporals, and a few men.

VI. *Hospital-Attendants.*—The three armies, the Paris and Lyons corps, and the imperial guard, employ 3900 hospital-attendants. Their present effective amounts to 5000, 2000 of which are employed in Algeria. The existing resources are therefore insufficient to insure the fulfilment of the duties in the active armies and in Algeria.

Even if we allow that, during the time of war, the number of hospital-attendants employed in Algeria may be reduced from 2000 to 1500, and that a like number of 1500 would be sufficient for the hospitals at home, we find that at least 6900 would be required at the moment of going on to a war establishment. The present effective being 5000, it would therefore be necessary to appoint about 1900 more hospital-attendants at such a time.

In order that hospital-attendants and litter-carriers when appointed should answer the purpose of their institution, it is advisable that, before going on to a war establishment, a certain number of attendants employed in our large hospitals at home and in Algeria should

receive some special instruction under the control of the administration and medical department.<sup>1</sup>

VII. *Workmen of the Administrative Department.*—The number of workmen of the administrative department of all classes attached to the three armies, the corps of Paris and Lyons, and the imperial guard, amounts to 6667. Their present effective is 3700. There are therefore wanting about 3000, who will likewise have to be drawn from the army-reserves at the time of going on a war establishment. With regard to the requirements of the home-service and Algeria, it seems useless to occupy ourselves with them; for most of the duties would have to be undertaken by civil workmen during a period of war.

At the time of passing on to a war establishment, it would therefore be necessary to obtain from the army-reserves 1900 hospital-attendants and 3000 workmen, in all 4900 men. Now the present resources of these reserves in men of this class are 4718 men. There is therefore a deficiency of about 200 men. The 1200 workmen of the administrative department who are set down in the preceding table, which indicates the strength of the army on the war establishment, might be formed during the first few months following the transition to a war establishment.

VIII. *Employés of the Administrative Department.*—The formation of active armies, as it is set forth in the above schemes, would require a total of 488 writing-clerks, or pupils of the administrative department. The present effectives allow these requirements to be satisfied immediately; but it would be necessary, in order not to injure the service at home and in Algeria, that recruiting should furnish without delay a new contingent of about

<sup>1</sup> This instruction is almost completely indicated in the "Dictionnaire des Sciences Médicales," vol. viii., article "Despotats," signed Percy. It would be the part of the Military Board of Health to complete it.

300 young men intended to increase the number of these *employés* of the department.

IX. *Officers of the Administrative Department.*—The three armies, the corps of Paris and Lyons, and the imperial guard, require a total of 811 officers of the administrative department, of all ranks, distributed as follows :—250 in counting-house duties, 247 in the hospital-service, 243 in the commissariat-service, and 63 in the encampment-service. The normal cadre is sufficient to provide for the counting-house and encampment services, allowing that, for the duties which will continue to be carried on at home and in Algeria, a certain number of civil clerks are employed, and that generally enterprise will supply direct management. With regard to the hospital-service, supposing that it was necessary to leave about 75 officers of this service in Algeria and many at home, we find, in order to arrive at the number of 247 officers of the administrative department for the hospital service, which are considered indispensable to the active armies, a deficiency of about 80. It would therefore be necessary, at the time of mobilization, to appoint 80 officers of the administrative department for the hospital service.

X. *Medical Officers.*—The different army-corps, including that of the guard, employ 707 medical officers of all ranks. The regular cadre can easily supply these, for it is useless to give attention to the requirements which must be satisfied at home, and even in Algeria ; in case of need, civil surgeons can be employed when required.

XI. *Commissariat.*—The *personnel* of the military commissariat employed in the three armies, the Paris and Lyons corps, and the imperial guard, is composed of 3 commissaries-general, 14 military commissaries, and 168 sub-commissaries and deputies. The present cadre consisting of 8 commissaries-general, 26 military commissaries, and 230 sub-commissaries and deputies,



there would therefore remain at our disposal to supply the service in France and Algeria:—5 commissaries-general, 12 military commissaries, and 62 sub-commissaries and deputies.

Now, even with the resources of the cadre of reserve, the number of 12 military commissaries is not sufficient for the service in Algeria and the most important home-divisions. Officers in active service are, in fact, needed at the following stations:—Algiers, Oran, Constantine, Paris, Châlons, Lyons, Marseilles, Toulouse, Rennes, Lille, Metz, Strasbourg, Besançon, and Grenoble; 14 in all. There is, therefore, a deficiency of two officers of the rank of commissary.

As regards the rank of sub-commissaries and deputies, we think that at least 116 are necessary for Algeria and the home-service, distributed as follows:—30 in Algeria; 8 at Paris; 15 at Lyons, Metz, and Strasbourg; 4 at Marseilles; 6 at Lille and the camp of Châlons; 19 at Toulouse, Rouen, Montpellier, Toulon, Verdun, Langres, Mézières, Thionville, Belfort, Besançon, Arras, Douai, Valenciennes, Dunkerque, Nantes, Bordeaux, Brest, and Bayonne; lastly, 34 for the remainder of the home-service, that is, one to every two departments. After the organization of the armies there remain 62 officers of these ranks at our disposal. The deficiency is that of 54 sub-commissaries and deputies.

On the whole, it seems necessary, in case of the formation of the three armies and the Paris and Lyons army-corps, to reinforce the commissariat-cadre by 2 commissaries and 54 sub-commissaries and deputies.

XII. *Officers of the Staff.*—The number of staff-officers of all ranks strictly necessary for the three armies, the Paris and Lyons corps, and the imperial guard, is 446,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this number of 446, the officers are not included who would be necessary for the telegraphic service: if this service were organized it would



allowing only one aide-de-camp to generals of divisions, suppressing the aides-de-camp of the generals who are chiefs of the staff, and taking away the lieutenants of the staff from their regimental stage in order to make them co-operate in the service of the divisional staffs.

The number of officers of this corps, which it would be strictly necessary to leave in France and Algeria, even if we suppress the aides-de-camp of the generals commanding territorial divisions, is 188, distributed as follows :—

Attached to the Emperor and Princes	6
Attached to the Minister of war	3
At the war-dépôt and offices of the ministry	10
Staffs of the 6 great commands of France	24
Staffs of the territorial divisions (2 for each division, except Paris and Lyons, which would have 6)	52
Aides-de-camp of generals command- ing territorial divisions	22
Paris	4
Attached to the commandant of the dépôts of the guard	1
On mission	7
Military schools	12
In Algeria	42
In Senegal	1
Aides-de-camp of the marshals not in active employment	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>188</b>

Altogether 446 belonging to the armies.  
188 in France and Algeria.

Total 634

Now the cadre of the staff-corps only contains 580 officers, including the 100 lieutenants.

There is therefore ■ deficiency of 54 officers, without reckoning the non-efficients which must necessarily exist in the corps, and may be estimated at about 15 to 20, according to the accounts which seem correct ; and without reckoning, on the other hand, those which ■ telegraphic service would necessitate (about 15).

Under these conditions, and without entering into an inquiry into the question how this deficit might be filled up otherwise than by borrowing from the main-body of troops, it would be desirable for the administration of the army to put at the disposal of the staff-corps, for the service of its offices in the armies as well as at home, a considerable number of its writing-clerks and pupils to be employed under the title of secretaries, a plan which seems possible. By this means we should avoid the serious inconvenience of weakening the various corps by taking from them, as has been done hitherto, sub-officers to fill these posts.

XIII. *Rolling Stock*.—The three armies, the Paris and Lyons corps, and the imperial guard, require a working stock of :—

2540 one-horse baggage-carts ;

247 four-wheeled carriages for 2 horses, called staff-carriages ;

2496 four-horse waggons for the military train ;

780 one-horse carts (Masson carts) for the light train.

The administration possess at this moment :—

2100 one-horse baggage-carts ;

380 four-wheeled carriages for 2 horses for the staff ;  
and about 400 Masson carts.

There is, therefore, a deficiency of but 440 one-horse baggage-carts and 380 one-horse carts for the light train.

With regard to four-horse train-waggons, the supplies of

the administration show ■ number more than double that which is necessary.

If the administration intends, as seems likely, to convey along with the troops one day's provisions (rice, biscuit, sugar, and coffee), at the rate of one cart to each battalion of infantry and one to every regiment of cavalry, the necessary stock exists and is more than sufficient.

XIV. *Supply of Draught-horses for the regimental and staff-carts.*—For drawing the regimental and other baggage-carts, there would be necessary as follows :—

	Draught-horses.
For 2540 two-wheeled regimental carts .	2667 <sup>1</sup>
For 247 four-wheeled staff-carriages .	519
For 69 four-horse treasury carriages .	276
For 3 four-horse printing carriages .	12
Total . . . . .	<u>3474</u>

Pack-mules, as follows :—

	Pack-mules.
For the general and divisional staffs .	131
For the 105 regiments of infantry and the 21 battalions of chasseurs (including the guard), ambulance-canteens . . . . .	356
For the 57 regiments of cavalry (including the guard), ambulance and veterinary canteens . . . . .	171
Total . . . . .	<u>658</u>

## RECAPITULATION OF DEFICIENCIES.

### OFFICERS.

Staff-officers, at least . . . . .	90
Military commissaries . . . . .	2
Sub-commissaries and deputies . . . . .	54
Officers for the hospital service . . . . .	80

<sup>1</sup> This total includes the number of inefficient horses at the rate of 1 in 20.

## MEN.

	Number of men indispens- able.	Number of men in active service.	Number of men in reserve.	Deficit.
Infantry . . . . .	466,572	266,235	129,544	70,793
Cavalry . . . . .	68,025	55,340	18,500	—
Artillery . . . . .	57,498	37,825	18,968	705
Military Train . . . . .	16,508	8,000	4,800	3,708
Hospital attendants and work- men of the Administrative De- partment . . . . .	13,567	8,700	4,718	149
Writing clerks and pupils of the Administrative Department . . . . .	780	480	—	300
Total . . . . .	622,950	376,580	176,530	75,655

From this table it will be observed that the cavalry alone have a surplus of 5815 men.

Thus, if all the reserves were called into active service in order to obtain the numbers of the effectives stated in the tables, there would still remain a deficiency of 75,655 men; but this figure must be reduced by 5815 men who form the surplus in the cavalry branch; the deficiency is thus reduced to 69,840. This deficit ought to be covered by the class next to be called out on the 1st of July. The available contingent of this class may be estimated at 78,800 men, a number which, in case of war, would certainly be increased by about 15,000 volunteer recruits. On the 1st of July we may reckon, therefore, on about 93,000 young soldiers who, added to the present reserves of the army, form a total exceeding the requirements by about 23,000.

## HORSES AND MULES.

	SADDLE-HORSES.	Horses.
Cavalry . . . . .		6409
Artillery . . . . .		2957

	Horses.
Engineers . . . . .	540
Military train . . . . .	1640
	<hr/>
Total deficit . . . . .	11,546 <sup>1</sup>

**DRAUGHT-HORSES.**

Artillery . . . . .	9313
Engineers . . . . .	1308
Military train . . . . .	10,000
Horses for the regimental and staff carriages . . . . .	3474
	<hr/>
Total deficit . . . . .	24,095 <sup>2</sup>

**PACK-MULES AND PACK-HORSES.**

Artillery . . . . .	780
Engineers . . . . .	96
Corps of infantry and cavalry troops . . . . .	527
Staffs . . . . .	131
Military train . . . . .	0 <sup>3</sup>
	<hr/>
Total deficit . . . . .	1,534

<sup>1</sup> In this total is not included the number of saddle-horses which it would still be necessary to give, when put on a war establishment, to the adjutants-major and surgeons of the infantry corps, as well as to the officers of the administrative department and the chaplains employed in the army-corps, who have a right to receive riding-horses from the State. This number amounts to about 1400.

<sup>2</sup> This number of 24,095 does not include the draught-horses which are necessary to draw the provision-waggons of the reserve intended to march with the battalions and regiments of cavalry. At the rate of 4 horses for each the number would amount to 1633.

<sup>3</sup> The train in Algeria is in possession of a number of mules sufficient for the requirements of the armies in Europe. The military train has also 981 mules in France in the care of the agriculturists. These 981 mules might be deducted from those which would have to be obtained from Algeria for the armies in Europe. The mules, thus remaining in Algeria, would be made use of by the provisional companies of the train established at this point at the time of transition from a peace to a war establishment.



## ROLLING STOCK.

One-horse carts of the regimental train .	440
Carts of the light train, called "Masson carts" . . . . .	380
	<hr/>
Total deficit . . . . .	820
	<hr/>

POSITION OF OUR STOCK OF ARMS AND OF OUR  
SUPPLIES OF WAR MUNITIONS.

FOR THE ARMIES CALLED TO TAKE THE FIELD.

*Arms and Ammunition.*—We have at the present time 155,000 guns of the 1866 model. We may reckon that by the 1st of April we shall have 100,000 more of them, which will make up, at that date, 255,000 guns of this model.

We have at the present time 50,000 converted guns. By the 1st of April we shall have 100,000 more of them, which will secure to us on the 1st of April a total of 355,000 breech-loading guns.

Guns of the 1866 model . . . . .	255,000
Converted guns . . . . .	100,000
	<hr/>
Total . . . . .	355,000
	<hr/>

This number corresponds with our conjectured requirements for the equipment of the whole of our infantry employed in the armies. By the 1st of July all our depôts of infantry and the corps serving in Algeria may be provided with a fresh arm. We shall have, in fact, by that time 370,000 guns of the 1866 model and 150,000 converted guns.

Of ammunition for the infantry we have at the present time 34,000,000 cartridges for guns of the 1866 model, and 5,000,000 cartridges for the converted guns. On the 1st of April we shall have 55,000,000 cartridges for the guns of the 1866 model and 20,000,000 cartridges for

the converted guns ; at this date, therefore, our requirements will be satisfied.

Independently of the fact that each infantry soldier carries with him 90 cartridges for each man provided with a gun of the 1866 model, and 60 for a converted gun, the supply of the magazine attached to the armies would give 250 cartridges more to each man. The manufacture is going to be actively carried on in order to suffice for an increased supply.

*Field Artillery.*—We reckon that the armies require 918 cannon.

With the present resources, each piece of ordnance can have a supply of ammunition ensured of 400 charges. On the 1st of April this supply will be doubled, and at the present time we are placing ourselves in a position to have a second double supply.

*Siege Guns.*—We have at this time a great siege train, both as regards *matériel* and men, all in readiness to follow our armies. We have also a second one as far as regards the *matériel*.

*Paris, January 20th, 1868.*

## CHAPTER III.

## QUESTIONS RELATIVE TO THE MOBILIZATION OF THE ARMY.

THE predeliberation of the Chief of the State extended not only to making sure of the number of soldiers that he could at a given moment place under arms, but it likewise included the means he judged the most expedient for facilitating the mobilization of the army. We must however confess that the routine of the bureau often impedes the most useful measures.

Marshal Niel had certainly stated to the Emperor that he had ready prepared in his office all the orders necessary for calling out the soldiers of the reserve, and that owing to the measures he had taken, the effectives of all the corps destined to join the active armies ought to be completed within a space of nine days or fifteen days at the most. Marshal Lebœuf, who succeeded him as Minister of War, also asserted that fifteen days would be sufficient. Unfortunately experience proved that this could not be the case.

The Emperor several times urged that the regiments should be allotted to divisions, a plan which would have the advantage of forming the staffs beforehand, and placing the various generals in communication with the troops they were to command ; but at the War-office so many obstacles were made to this scheme that he was obliged to relinquish it.

It was desirable that the encampment stores should be given out to the troops, so that in case of mobilization no delay should occur in their distribution. The

Minister sent to the Emperor the following note on this subject :—

NOTE.

ON THE ENCAMPMENT STORES TO BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE TROOPS.

“ The rapid transition from a peace establishment to ■ war establishment being in the present armies a necessary condition, it would seem only natural to give out the various encampment stores to all the corps in time of peace. By this means a double result would be arrived at. The soldiers would learn how to carry and make use of them, and if war should supervene they would be ready provided with them. (We here include in the number of camp stores the small cans which take the place of the goat-skin of the Spaniards.)

“ The inconvenience of this system is as follows : ■ the soldiers in time of peace do not make any use of these articles, they do not attach any importance to their preservation ; and, on the other hand, as the damages are charged to them, like those of the bedding and many other things, the mass of individuals find themselves involved in debt, and the soldiers become negligent because they lose all chance of receiving an off-reckoning. Induced by the same motive, the corps postpone as long as possible the repair of these articles, which therefore remain in a bad state. When war supervenes there is no time to make the repairs, and the soldier leaves without there being any certainty that he is actually provided with that which becomes indispensable to him. If, on the contrary, a distribution was made at that time of all the camp stores *in a perfect state*, there would be no anxiety on this account, and the soldier would have the ■ of the stores and carry the load they would impose on him just at the very time when he would be sensible of their utility.

“ These are the considerations which have induced us,

unless new orders are received from the Emperor, to arrange matters as follows :—

■ All the regiments of infantry which are in the camps (62 this year) are provided with camp stores. At the breaking up of the camps they deposit these stores in a magazine, where they are immediately made as good as new.

“ In the cavalry divisions at Versailles, Lunéville, and Lyons, there is one squadron furnished with camp stores. Each squadron may, therefore, in its turn, bivouac and engage in all the duties of service in the field. The Minister gives orders that the 6 regiments of the imperial guard should likewise receive camp stores for one squadron. There will be, therefore, in all 20 regiments of cavalry, which will be partly provided with camp stores.

“ In addition to this, the regiments at the camp of Châlons (8 for the two series), and those, 3 in number, at the camp at Lannemezan have, during the time the encampment lasts, camp stores for their whole effective. There are, therefore, 31 regiments altogether which are either wholly or partially supplied.

“ With regard to instruction these arrangements appear sufficient, as the regiments will pass every two years through the camps or active divisions.

“ We consider that this system is the best ; it suffices for the instruction of the men, it is much more economical for the state and the soldiers, and, lastly, it ensures the certainty that, on the day of taking the field, each man will be provided with stores in a perfect state.

“ MARSHAL NIEL.”

“ 25th July, 1868.

#### MOBILIZATION OF WAR-SQUADRONS.

To the desire expressed by the Emperor of having the war squadrons of the regiments of cavalry always mobilized, Marshal Niel, the Minister of War, replied by the following note :—



“ In armies where the duration of service is long, as in Russia, and in those where recruiting is not carried on by means of levies, as in England, the contingents of recruits are comparatively few in number, and it is possible to entrust their instruction to a fraction of the corps which forms the *depôt* of the regiment. This is what has often been practised in France in all branches of the service, and even in the cavalry, under the rule of the law of March 21st, 1832. The contingents embodied every year do not amount to ■ seventh part of the effective of the army, for the law of the 26th of April, 1855, had the effect of keeping under the colours many old soldiers whose instruction was completed.

“ In armies where the duration of service is short, as in Prussia, it becomes necessary to make all the thoroughly constituted fractions of them join in the instruction of the young soldiers.

“ Thus the recruits are distributed in equal portions among the companies, squadrons, or batteries of the same regiment, which is often dispersed in several garrisons, instead of their being assembled in one *depôt* under command of one chief. The winter time is devoted to instruction in details, which is pushed forward ■ rapidly that in the spring the young soldiers, together with the old soldiers, may enter upon the manœuvres together.

The law of the 1st of February, 1868, by reducing the length of service to five years (in reality to four years and a half), increases in a considerable proportion the force of the contingents of recruits to be embodied every year. If we take into consideration the fact that the guard and gendarmery ■■ composed of nothing but old soldiers whose instruction is complete, and who are chosen from among the best men of the line ; and if we deduct the effectives of certain special corps, which recruit by other means than the levies, we shall recog-

nize the fact that in regiments of the line of all branches, recruits palpably compose a fourth part of their effective force.

“ In case of need it will be possible, in the case of the infantry, to instruct them in any depôts which offer the necessary resources ; but in the cavalry a similar measure seems, if not impossible, at least so difficult to carry out that it is expedient to relinquish it.

“ Let us take for example a regiment of cavalry, consisting of 5 squadrons. Its winter effective is 739 men, officers included. It will receive every year on an average from 160 to 180 recruits, whom it will be necessary to instruct. Distributed in equal numbers in all the squadrons, that is 35 to each squadron, their instruction, beginning on the 1st of October, will be sufficiently advanced by the 1st of April for them to be able to take part in the combined manœuvres which commence at that time. With still greater reason, they will be ready to enter the camps of instruction by the 1st of May or the 15th of July.

“ It must not, in fact, be forgotten that the instruction of the soldier is effected as much by his mess-comrades as by his officers ; since the former teach the young soldiers the traditions of the regiment, and make them acquainted with all the details of their profession.

“ If, on the contrary, the young soldiers are united in one squadron by themselves, the task of the officers and non-commissioned drill-officers would be more laborious, and the instruction much slower. When once their classes are finished, the recruits are sent into the squadrons for which they are destined ; they change their commander ; and, on the whole, there is much time lost, and disadvantages of every kind are caused which it is wise to take into account. But in the cavalry the question is also complicated by the training of the horses. For teaching riding, old horses are necessary ; and, on

the other hand, the place for young horses is necessarily in the dépôt squadrons. Another thing is, that in order to train these young horses, riders are required whose instruction is completed.

"There are in this plan irreconcilable difficulties, which might however be avoided by distributing the young horses and young soldiers equally in all the squadrons, except that, at the time of taking the field, the dépôt squadron must be composed of men and horses which would not be capable of rendering good war service. The same plan would be adopted when regiments were called on to form part of a camp.

"This last mode of operation is dictated by the conditions of the new recruiting law. It offers, however, several disadvantages in details—that of having recruits in all the squadrons during the winter season is the most considerable ; but this time of the year is not the season for warlike operations, and, besides, this inconvenience is compensated for by the advantage of giving to our cavalry officers, by making them join in the instruction, habits of activity which it is more essential to maintain in this branch than in any other, which also are so often wanting in corps of troops which, like the guard, have no recruits to train.

"In short, taking into account the new law which has reduced the time of effective service to four years and a half, all the efforts of the cavalry should tend to bring as quickly as possible both men and horses into a fit state to take the field. All the officers, from the colonel down to the sub-lieutenant, should co-operate for this end, which is their first duty in time of peace. At the time of placing the regiment on a war establishment, the mobilized squadrons will be made up in the strongest manner ; the least valuable elements in officers, men, and horses will compose the dépôt.

"MARSHAL NIEL.

"25th July, 1868."

## ARTILLERY.

*New Matériel.*

The government of the Second Empire has been reproached with not having formed an artillery as efficient as that of Prussia. When in the campaign of 1870, every one was struck with the precision and range of the steel breech-loading cannon, it was immediately concluded that the French Board of Ordnance ought to have long since adopted this new style of gun.

Those who bring forward these accusations are ignorant of all the complicated and difficult problems which are involved in this question, because on the advantages and disadvantages of the different systems the most intelligent persons are divided in opinion. "Do you adopt steel cannon?" it will be said; "but you see the Prussians have quite given them up." "Do you adopt breech-loading cannon? but you see that the English artillery has completely relinquished them!"

It is, therefore, natural that the Board of Ordnance in France should have hesitated long before changing ■ *matériel* which proved in Italy what it was capable of, and the transformation of which would lead to an excessive expenditure.

The personal opinion of the Emperor was that it would be necessary to make new breech-loading cannon of bronze, but there is ■ reason to be surprised that he did not enforce his opinion; for it would have been a great piece of presumption on his part if he pretended to solve this question better than the professional and distinguished men who composed the Board of Ordnance. Nevertheless, the Emperor had made, in the first place at his own expense, at the factory at Meudon, some trials in mitrailleuses and bronze breech-loading seven-pounder guns. These trials succeeded perfectly under the skilful direction of Major de Reffye; but, excepting the mitrailleuses, the guns had not yet been sufficiently tested so as to be adopted by the board.



Any change of our *matériel* could not, therefore, be a matter in question in 1870. The Chief of the State was compelled to limit his attention to making sure that the field guns would be promptly distributed to the regiments which were to serve them. On this point he received from the Minister of War the following report:—

*Note from the Minister of War on the Local Position of the Matériel of the various Batteries.*

“In order to satisfy the desire expressed by the Emperor, the Minister of War has the honour of laying before his Majesty the following information as to the various points at which, in case of mobilization, each army-corps would find its *matériel*:—

“*Artillery.*—The artillery *matériel* is divided into two classes:—

“*The first class* includes the *matériel* mounted on wheels ready for the march; it is composed of 90 batteries, 20 of 12-pounder rifle guns and 70 of 4-pounder rifle guns, with corresponding park-appointments and 16 divisionary reserves of infantry.

“These batteries are distributed as follows:—

BATTERIES.					12-pounders.	7-pounders.
At Vincennes	.	.	.	.	2	7
At Versailles	.	.	.	.	2	4
At La Fère	.	.	.	.	2	3
At Douai	.	.	.	.	—	4
At Metz	.	.	.	.	■	6
At Strasbourg	.	.	.	.	3	6
At Besançon	.	.	.	.	—	6
At Lyons	.	.	.	.	■	2
At Valence	.	.	.	.	—	4
At Grenoble	.	.	.	.	—	4
At Toulon	.	.	.	.	2	6
At Rennes	.	.	.	.	■	6
At Toulouse	.	.	.	.	—	8
At Bourges	.	.	.	.	3	4
					20	70
					90	



"As far as the means of storing have allowed, we have placed with each regiment ■ number of battery *matériel* equal at least to supplying the number of artillerymen of the corps.

• "Thus at Vincennes, where two regiments are stationed numbering altogether, in men, 16 batteries, either field guns or horse artillery, there is the *matériel* for 9 batteries ready for harnessing.

"The *second class* is composed of the same elements as the first, but would require 15 days to be put upon the road. It would make up 11 batteries of 12-pounders and 47 batteries of 4-pounders, total 58, with 9 divisio- nary reserves of infantry.

"These 58 batteries have been distributed according to the same principles as those of the first class. It is proper to add to these the 24 batteries of bullet-guns which are collected at Meudon. These batteries have no *personnel* either prepared or organized, and consequently a certain time would be required to place them in the field.

"With regard to harnessing, the same principles have been followed as in the case of the batteries, that is to say, every garrison of artillery has ■ reserve proportionate to its requirements in case of mobilization.

"In addition to this, a *depôt* of 5000 sets of harness is now being formed at St. Omer, near to the regiment of the train ; and at Auxonne, near the 2nd regiment, there is ■ *depôt* of 8000 sets of harness.

"In short, the fundamental idea of the measures that have been taken is that each army-corps and each army should find on the spot where they are formed both the men and the *matériel* of the artillery which is necessary for it. As far as possible, the batteries belonging to the same regiment and the regiments of the same artillery-command will be united in the same army-corps, under command of their natural chiefs.

" Thus, for instance, if it was intended to form an army in the east on the scale of three corps, the corps on the right would find its artillery at Besançon, the central corps at Strasbourg, and that on the left at Metz.

" The army formed in the north would be supplied with its resources at Douai, La Fère, Vincennes and Rennes.

" The army of reserve with resources at Toulouse and Bourges.

" The army-corps of Lyons at Grenoble, Lyons, and Valence.

" The reserve corps of Paris with the surplus of the regiments of Vincennes, La Fère, Douai, and Bourges.

" *Engineers.*—The parks of engineers, organized according to the bases recently fixed, will not be completed until the end of the year 1868.

" We have at our immediate disposal 43 company parks, 8 army-corps parks, and two principal parks.

" The company parks are placed as follows :—

At Arras . . . . .	4
At Metz . . . . .	28
At the Camp of Châlons . . . . .	3
At the Camp of Lannemezan . . . . .	1
At the Camp of Satory . . . . .	1
At Civita Vecchia . . . . .	1
At Montpellier . . . . .	5
	—
Total . . . . .	43

" The 8 army-corps parks are placed at Lyons, Vincennes, and Metz ; the first army will find those belonging to it at Metz, the second at Metz and Vincennes, and the reserve army at Lyons.

" The two principal parks are at Metz : they will be joined to the 1st and 2nd armies. The third principal park which is to be made will be joined to the reserve army.

*“Military Train.*—All the *matériel* of the military train is at this moment at Vernon.

“This *matériel* is at its full complement, with the exception of 283 carriages for the wounded.

• “If at the time of mobilization these carriages had not been made they would be replaced by a like number of pairs of litters.

*“Clothing and Camp-Stores.*—The store-houses belonging to the corps contain the articles of clothing necessary for the men embodied and for those who would be drawn from the reserve at the time of the mobilization of the army.

“Reserve stores would besides be sent forward from the central store-houses to the bases of operation of the various armies, as soon as they had passed the frontier.

“The camping *matériel*, of which we have sufficient quantities in store, would be obtained :—

“For the 1st army ; from Metz, Strasbourg, Châlons, and Paris.

“For the 2nd army and the imperial guard ; from Paris and Lille.

“For the 3rd ; from Lyons, and in case of need, from Paris, which contains the greatest quantity of stores.

*“Harnessing.*—The cavalry regiments have in store a number of sets of harness equal to their effectives on a war establishment.

“The central store-houses have besides a reserve supply of 12,000 saddles intended to follow the army-corps. The first army will find this reserve at Metz and Strasbourg, the second at Paris and Lille, and the • third at Lyons and Marseilles.

“The store-house at Paris, from which the reserves have been forwarded to the central store-houses mentioned above, will shortly receive 5000 saddles, which are now in course of preparation.

*“Stores for the Victualling Department.*—The vic-

tualling department has its *matériel* complete except ■ deficiency of 736 tarpaulins. A contract has been made to increase its stores.

“The first army will find its *matériel* at Strasbourg, Langres, and Paris.

“The 2nd army and the imperial guard at Paris ;

■ The 3rd army at Lyons and Marseilles.

“*Ambulance Matériel.*—The ambulance *matériel* is complete. It is collected at Paris in the central store-houses and in the yards recently constructed at the Invalides. A reserve is constituted at Marseilles with the special object of supplying the wants of Algeria and of any troops embarking in the Mediterranean ports.

“MARSHAL NIEL.

“25th July, 1868.”

#### DISTRIBUTION OF THE MILITARY TRAIN.

The Emperor having asked, in 1868, how long a time would be required to put on wheels the carriages in store at Vernon, he received the reply, that this operation would last several months. Surprised at such an answer, he issued an order to distribute the carriages in different places, and the Minister of War, in pursuance of this order, gave an account of his performance of it, in the following note :—

“The concentration at Vernon of all the vehicles belonging to the military train, is dangerous at all times ; in case of war, the long delay necessary for sending off so considerable an amount of *matériel* (at the present time 6700 vehicles, 10,000 sets of harness, 1400 pack-saddles, &c.), might hinder a prompt mobilization ; in order to remedy this state of things the following measures have been adopted :—

“To construct sheds in the park of Châteauroux for about 1200 vehicles, in order that the squadron of the military train, the dépôt of which is situated at that

place, may find within its reach the vehicles necessary for it without being obliged to get them from Vernon.

■ To take advantage of the establishment of artillery and engineers at Satory to place there all the vehicles which have to be made over to the staffs and corps of troops, the delivery or despatch of these vehicles necessarily absorbing for a certain time the resources of the park at Vernon, and, consequently, hindering the formation of the parks of administration intended for the armies.

“ To construct shelter at the camp of Châlons for about 600 vehicles intended for the companies of the train marching with the first divisions.

“ To distribute in the fortified places in the east, the regimental carriages intended for the first corps.

“ When this scheme is carried out the distribution of vehicles will be as follows :—

1st Army.	Regimental carriages for 1 division of infantry, at Metz.	
	Regimental carriages for 1 division of infantry, at Strasbourg.	
	Regimental carriages for 1 division of infantry, at Besançon.	
	Regimental carriages for the re- mainder of the army.	} at Toul.
	Staff carriages for brigades and divi- sions . . . . .	
	Vehicles of the military train, at the camp of Châlons.	

Reserve, at Vernon.

2nd Army.	Regimental and staff-carriages for 1 divisions of infantry, and 1 division of cavalry, at Lyons.	
	The remainder of the regimental and staff-carriages, at Satory.	
	All the vehicles of the military train and reserve, at Châteauroux.	



3rd army, { Regimental and staff-carriages, at Satory.  
reserve  
army, &c. } All the others vehicles, at Vernon.

"Taking this for granted, the first army would find, between the camp of Châlons and the frontier, all the carriages which are necessary to put it in marching order.

"The army of Lyons has its carriages close at hand, those of the army of Paris are at Satory; at the same time the parks of Châteauroux and Vernon would supply the carriages necessary for the 2nd and 3rd armies.

"The small dépôts in the east are being organized at the present time; the carriages for one division are at Metz; at Strasbourg there are only the carriages for one brigade, and at Besançon those for one regiment; the dépôt at Toul will be opened in a few days.

"The buildings erected at Châlons, according to the plans mentioned above, will probably be finished in ■ month.

"There are at Lyons the carriages requisite for one division of infantry and one division of cavalry; in ■ short time there will be supplied those for ■ second division of infantry, when the repairs of the *matériel* sent from Civita Vecchia are finished.

"The sheds now in course of construction at Satory will contain all the regimental carriages.

"We may hope that before the spring the whole distribution of *matériel* will be finished in the various stations, with the exception, however, of the park at Châteauroux, where the works could not be begun for want of funds."

It will be seen from the preceding statement, that the Chief of the State had thoroughly examined, as far as was in his power, into the various questions which bear upon the proper constitution of the army.

## CHAPTER IV.

## MILITARY LAW OF 1868.

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE PROBABLE EFFECTIVE FORCES OF THE  
FRENCH AND GERMAN ARMIES.

ACCORDING to the lists set forth in Chapter II., the Emperor, in 1868, thought it indispensable to be able to place in the field 490,000 men distributed as follows :

	Men.
The 1st army, having for a reserve the imperial guard, would be . . . .	162,000
The 2nd army . . . . .	121,000
The 3rd army . . . . .	87,000
The army-corps of Paris . . . . .	40,000
The army-corps of Lyons or Belfort . . . . .	26,000
The troops in Algeria . . . . .	54,000
	<hr/>
Total . . . . .	490,000

In order that France might be able to place on the frontier this number of men it would be necessary to include among them the last class called out. But if war took place in the spring, the young soldiers of this class, whose military instruction was not completed, must have been left for a certain time in the dépôts. On the other hand, if the whole of the active army was devoted to a foreign war-service, there would not be any experienced soldiers left at home to defend the fortified places, for the men assembled in the dépôts must be employed solely in keeping up to their full complement

the effectives of the corps in the field and even in forming the 4th battalions.

In short, the experience acquired in the preceding wars had more than enough demonstrated that the number of soldiers forming the reserve was not large enough ; in the first place, because the number of men called out was always inferior to the official number ; secondly, because it is important to be able to embody soldiers who have been already trained in the depôts ; and lastly, because it was indispensable to be able to create promptly, behind the active army, another army of reserve, ready to give support to the first or even to take its place in case of reverses.

The result of these investigations was that, in order to be in a position to meet any contingencies which might occur, it was necessary for France to have 400,000 men under arms and 400,000 in reserve.

Impressed with these ideas, in 1868, Marshal Niel, presented to the Chambers a bill asking,—

Firstly, that the whole class, deducting the exemptions and licences laid down by the law of 1832, should be placed at the disposal of the government. It would be about 150,000 every year.

Secondly, that the annual financial law should divide into two parts each class called out by drawing lots, one part of which would be embodied in the active army and the other would form part of the reserve.

Thirdly, that the duration of service in the active army should be five years, at the expiration of which the soldiers should serve four years more in the reserve.

Fourthly, that the length of service for the young soldiers who have not been included in the active army, should be four years in the reserve and five years in the national *garde mobile*.

This project was modified by the *corps législatif*

which supported the principle of the law of 1832, as to the annual vote of the contingent and its division into two parts :—the first composed of young soldiers who were to be placed in active service ; the second, of those who were left at their homes.

With regard to the national *garde mobile*, the *corps législatif*, by reducing the training to fifteen days in the year, and by requiring that this training should not involve ■ change of place of more than one day's journey, completely did away with the advantage which might have been derived from this new institution.

Nevertheless, the law of 1868 improved our military forces ; it placed at the disposal of the government 9 contingents of 100,000 men, if the *corps législatif* continued to vote the contingent which it has allowed in former years. It organized a reserve composed of soldiers, who, either under the colours or in the second part of the contingent, have belonged to the army for five years ; but in order that this law should produce the good results which were hoped for, it will be necessary to wait nine years.

One vexatious consequence of the law of 1868 was the suppression of the law of dotation which allowed re-enlistment with bounty ; this law, which we do not deny fell into the great error of permitting service to be dispensed with in consideration of ■ sum paid to the dotation fund, had the great advantage of keeping in the army the old non-commissioned officers ; the suppression of the bounty deprived the army of an element which gave to its cadres a great solidity.

Although in 1870, the law of 1868 had not had time to produce all its effects, the effective of the army, on the 1st July, 1869, was already considerable. We give the following recapitulatory table giving the position of the army on the 1st of July :—

# EFFECTIVE ACTUALLY PRESENT.

	Men.
General effective of the army on the 1st of July is . . . . .	414,754
General total of absentees at the same date . . . . .	35,534
	<hr/>
Number of men actually present in their corps is therefore . . . . .	<u>379,220</u>

# WAR EFFECTIVE.

The general effective of the active army on the 1st of July, 1869, is . . . . .	414,754
From this number must be deducted :	
Firstly, the organic non-efficients (staff of fortified places ; <i>gendarmerie</i> ; cavalry school ; horsemen of the remount and veterinary departments of the dépôts ; veterans) . . . . .	25,447
Secondly, the permanent deficit (discipline companies ; men in the hospitals, detached from their corps, under sentence, in confinement) . . . . .	30,230
	<hr/>
The effective of combatants in the active army is therefore . . . . .	<u>359,077</u>

# SOLDIERS AT THEIR HOMES.

(Not included in the effective of the corps)

Laws of 1832 and 1855 :—

Second portions of contingents, classes 1862-63-66 . . . . .	113,742	} 134,971
On unlimited furlough, classes 1862-63-64-65-66 . . . . .	21,229	



## Laws of 1868 :—

Men.

Second portions of contingents, classes 1867 and 1868 <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	104,315	} 104,626
Reserve, class 1867, proceeding from the 1st and 2nd portions . . . . .	311	

Total on the 1st of July, 1869 . . . . . 239,597

The non-efficients (employed in the public  
services, men invalided, sick, insubor-  
dinate, deserters) making . . . . . 5,345

Effective of men at our disposal in their  
homes (not included in the effectives of  
the corps) are reduced to . . . . . 234,252

Effective force of men ready to be placed in  
the field on 1st July, 1869 . . . . . 593,329

Total of the active army and the soldiers at  
their homes without deducting the non-  
efficients . . . . . 654,351

In the month of July, 1870, the effective was almost  
the same, ■ fact as to which we may be satisfied by  
the following note from Marshal Leboeuf, the Minister  
of War :—

*Summary for the Emperor on the Position of the Army.*

“ PARIS, July 6th, 1870.

“ Fifteen days after an order was given by the Emperor,  
two armies would be formed numbering :—

350,000 men of all arms.

875 cannon, with 1st and 2nd supplies.

<sup>1</sup> This number includes the 1st and 2nd portions of the contingents of  
the class of 1868, amounting to 77,185 men.

“ There would remain ;

At home . . . . .	181,500 men
In Algeria . . . . .	50,000 „
At Civita Vecchia . . . . .	6,500 „

Total . . . . . 238,000

Including the above number . . . . . 350,000

There would be . . . . . 588,000 at our disposal for war.

Including the non-efficients . . . . . 74,546

We get . . . . . 662,546 men

reckoned in the regular army.

“ To these forces, it is proper to add, on the first day, 100,000 men of the national *garde mobile*, clothed, equipped, armed and organized with their cadres.

“ After the imperial order was given, about three weeks would be required to convey from Africa to the Rhine the 3 regiments of zouaves, and the 3 regiments of *tirailleurs*, and to replace them in Algeria by 4 regiments of infantry of the line.

“ More than a month would be required to convey to Marseilles and Toulon the 4 regiments of *chasseurs d'Afrique*.

“ I have the honour of asking the Emperor to have the goodness to give me his orders as soon as his Majesty's determination is settled.

“ MARSHAL LEBCEUF,

“ Minister of War.”

It clearly results from the two returns of the state of the army furnished by the Ministers of War, both in 1869 and also in 1870, that the Emperor might reckon on an effective of 588,000 combatants. From this number must be subtracted 75,000 men of the contingent of the class of 1869, who had to be clothed and embodied on the 1st

of July, 1870, but not being fully trained had to remain some time in the dépôt; 50,000 men considered necessary for the service in Algeria; and 63,000 men including the cadres and old soldiers whom it is likewise necessary to leave in the dépôts.

After making these deductions, and also by diminishing the number of troops for the home-service and by recalling the brigade from Civita Vecchia, 400,000 men might be placed on the frontier.

The forces of the Empire are therefore distributed as follows:—

	Men.
Active army . . . . .	400,000
In the dépôts:—	
{ Old soldiers . . . . .	63,000
{ Class of 1869 . . . . .	75,000
Troops left in Algeria . . . . .	50,000
	<hr/>
	588,000
Non-efficients . . . . .	74,000
	<hr/>
Total effective . . . . .	<u>662,000</u>

As it was possible to diminish the troops in Algeria by 20,000 men, leaving there only 30,000, we might have in France over and above the 400,000 men placed on the frontier, a nucleus of 20,000 old soldiers, who, joined to the 138,000 left in the dépôts, might form the 4th battalions of the regiments in the field.

The question may be summed up, therefore, in the inquiry if this effective of 400,000 combatants was sufficient to resist the forces of Northern Germany.

Much has been said about the reports of Colonel Stoffel, and the question has been asked, how the Emperor, being acquainted with these reports, could hope that France would be able to bring into the field armies numerous enough to fight with Prussia.

On this subject it is necessary to examine thoroughly

what the forces of the Confederation of Northern Germany really were. If we reckon up the number of trained soldiers which this country possesses, a very considerable number is arrived at, which may be brought up to 900,000 men. For, independently of the cadres, the King of Prussia might have at his disposal, in addition to the 3 contingents each of about 80,000 men present under the colours, 9 contingents in reserve or in the "Landwehr." But this number, which gave Germany the immense advantage of being able immediately to raise its army to a war effective, to maintain it at its full complement, and with the "Landwehr" to create during the war several armies of reserve, represents by no means the real number of soldiers which this country could place in line at the commencement of a campaign; for this number must be in proportion to the permanent cadres of the army, and a somewhat protracted period is required to form the new cadres appropriated to the reserve-armies. Thus, the active army of the Northern Confederation was composed of thirteen army-corps, each one of which had an average effective not exceeding 30,000 men. If, therefore, the Confederation of Northern Germany could reckon on none but its own forces, and the Southern States did not join it, it could not place in line at the moment of a declaration of war more than 390,000 men. This number would have had to be reduced, for it was presumable that the King of Prussia would be obliged to leave one or two corps in Germany to defend the northern coasts against the contingency of an attack on the part of the French fleet, which, with a division composed of marine infantry and of the 4th battalions, was to have constituted a corps for disembarkation. This supposition did not appear to be an ill-founded one, because, in fact, at the commencement of the campaign, the 1st and the 6th corps remained on the coasts of the Baltic, and were not sent into France until

after our first reverses. Thus it was calculated that the number of the Prussian troops would not exceed 330,000 men.

If, however, the Southern States joined with Prussia, the latter would be reinforced by two Bavarian corps and two Wurtemberg and Baden divisions, forming a total of about 90,000 men.

The troops we might have to face would therefore be either 330,000 men without the Southern States, or 420,000 with their assistance.<sup>1</sup>

This was the army which, according to all probability, France would have to prepare to fight in 1870, and against which she was able to oppose 400,000 men, if the calculations of the Minister of War were correct, and if there had been sufficient time to get them together. There was therefore reason for thinking that the forces of the two adversaries would not be disproportionate.

<sup>1</sup> The three German armies which entered France at the commencement of the campaign did not amount to more than 338,000 men. The reserve armies did not appear on the fields of battle until a later time.



## CHAPTER V.

## PROJECT FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ARMY OF THE RHINE.

THE organization, as it was fixed by the Emperor in 1868 in the tables given in Chapter II., comprised with the guard 11 army-corps, 9 of which formed 3 distinct armies; so that this organization necessitated 3 chief staffs for each army and 11 staffs for the army-corps. Now, as numerous staffs are often a source of embarrassment, since we had an insufficient number of staff-officers, the Emperor determined to have only 8 army-corps, which would cut off 3 grand staffs for the army and 3 staffs for the army-corps. This was the formation fixed by the Emperor Napoleon I. in 1815, and put into practice in Italy in 1859. The army-corps formed one single army under one and the same command, although it was understood that the marshals would, according to circumstances, take the command of several army-corps united.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Emperor had received on this subject the following observations from a foreign general in whom he placed great confidence, and to whom, in 1870, he communicated the project of organization set forth in Chapter II. :—

“1. In January, 1868, 75,000 ■■■ were deficient to make up the war effective. This deficiency will have been subsequently lessened, but will not be done away with.

“2. After the space of eleven years without any great war, the number of illustrious military ■■■ is diminishing day by day, either through death or by infirmities, especially during the last two years. There is a deficiency of staff and administrative officers for forming head-quarters. It is, therefore, necessary to have ■ smaller number of the latter.

“3. The division into ■ or 3 is about the very worst. Napoleon demanded 5 units for the field of battle. The same troops might furnish 4

Let us here call to mind the arrangements of Napoleon I. in 1815. The army formed with such marvellous rapidity occupied, on the 1st of June, the cantonments pointed out below, and was organized as follows:—

The army which fought at Ligny and Waterloo.

1st corps, General Count d'Erlon:—4 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned at Lille.

2nd corps, General Count Reille:—4 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned at Valenciennes.

3rd corps, General Count Vandamme:—3 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned at Mézières.

4th corps, General Count Gérard:—3 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned at Metz.

6th corps, General Count Lobau:—3 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned at Laon.

The imperial guard:—3 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned at Paris.

army-corps of the centre of 3 or 4 divisions of infantry each, besides the imperial guard, each wing formed of a corps (or if desired of an army) of 4 or even 5 divisions of infantry (in the latter case without subdividing them into army-corps). There would, therefore, be a deduction of 4 headquarters of army-corps or of armies.

“4. The corps of Paris and Lyons cannot be reckoned as such, not being provided with reserves and parks. Their divisions will have to reinforce the other army-corps.

“5. Algeria, which is at present protected by 4 regiments of infantry and 4 squadrons of chasseurs or light troops, only furnishes ■ regiments and 1 battalion. This is too little.

“Three regiments and 3 battalions, as well as the dépôts of the African troops, the spahis, the 5th and 6th squadrons of the 7 cavalry regiments, and perhaps the 6 squadrons of the other regiments, mounted on Arab horses, would be sufficient with 2 field batteries.

“6. For the escort squadrons 3 regiments of cavalry have been broken up. This is very hard upon any brave troop which might be appropriated to this service. The regiments of light cavalry raising in France might each give their 5th squadron.

“7. There is nothing for the mountain batteries to do in the whole of Germany, the Tyrol excepted. Replace them with field batteries.

“8. Lastly, in a war for life or death, everything must be brought into play. The 8 first corps and the guard would be insufficient.”

Four corps of cavalry in reserve, under the orders of Marshal de Grouchy, were cantoned between the Aisne and the Sambre.

The army occupying the rest of the territory was composed of the following corps:—

5th corps, General Count Rapp:—3 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned in Alsace.

7th corps, Marshal Suchet:—4 divisions, 2 of which were of the selected National Guard, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned at Chambéry.

There were, besides, 4 corps of observation:

The 1st corps in Jura;

The 2nd corps in Var;

The 3rd corps in Eastern Pyrenees;

The 4th corps at Bordeaux;

Lastly, there was a corps in La Vendée.

Thus, on the 1st of June, the army which was to combine on the Belgian frontier was distributed along a line extending from Lille to Metz, and if the Emperor had been attacked before being able to concentrate his army-corps, some would not have failed to say that the troops had been too much scattered along the frontier. But the great art of the Emperor Napoleon was to conceal his movements from the enemy, and to combine the whole of his army on the Sambre before the enemy was aware of it.

## ORGANIZATION AND LOCALIZATION OF THE ARMY IN JULY, 1870.

### *Army of Alsace.*

1st corps, Marshal MacMahon:—4 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned in Alsace.

7th corps, General Douai:—3 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned at Belfort.

Cavalry in reserve:—1 division; cantoned at Haguenau.

The 7th corps, as soon as it was formed, was to have been united in Alsace to the 1st corps.

*Army of Metz.*

2nd corps, General Frossard:—3 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned in the vicinity of Metz.

3rd corps, Marshal Bazaine:—4 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned in the vicinity of Metz.

4th corps, General Ladmirault:—3 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned in the vicinity of Metz.

5th corps, General de Failly:—3 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; cantoned in the vicinity of Metz.

The imperial guard:—1 division, cantoned at Pont-à-Mousson; 1 division, cantoned at Lunéville.

Artillery of the reserve, cantoned at Toul.

*Army of Reserve.*

6th corps, Marshal Canrobert:—4 divisions of infantry, 1 division of cavalry; assembled at the camp of Châlons.

We have seen in the preceding chapters that the army ready to be placed in line could not be, in round numbers, more than 400,000 men, if 50,000 were left in Algeria, and 138,000 in the dépôts.

The result of this examination was that it was not possible, in July, 1870, to bring the war effective of the infantry regiments up to 2785 men, nor that of the battalions of chasseurs to 938, as had been fixed in the project of 1868; and it was decided that the active effective of each infantry regiment of the line should be 2520 men, and that of the battalions of foot-chasseurs 800 men; 1000 men were left at each dépôt of infantry regiments, 300 of which are old soldiers and 700 are young soldiers of the class of 1869, and 400 men at each dépôt of battalions of foot-chasseurs, 200 of which are old soldiers and 200 are young soldiers of the class of 1869. Consequently, the effective of the divisions of

infantry of the line, instead of being 13,134 men, the number fixed in 1868, had to be reduced to 11,967 men.

Out of the 24 divisions of infantry of the line which were to form the Armies of Alsace and Metz, there were 4 to which it was not possible to give a battalion of foot-chasseurs, as we had only 20 of these battalions, so that the effective of a division of infantry deprived of a battalion of foot-chasseurs had consequently to be diminished by 800 men, and reduced to 11,167. In the 1st army-corps there were two divisions, formed of some regiments of zouaves and some regiments of Algerian sharp-shooters, which had no battalions of chasseurs. In the 7th army-corps it was the same with regard to the divisions of Conseil-Dumesnil and Dumont.

The 17 divisions which made up the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th army-corps each had a battalion of foot-chasseurs.

The division of cavalry attached to the army-corps, which reckon 4 divisions of infantry, had to be formed of 3 brigades. The 3 armies would only have employed 50 regiments of cavalry out of 54, 3 of which were to be sent to Algeria. One would be left at our disposal for the chief head-quarters of the Army of the Rhine.

According to this, the effectives of the armies concentrated at Metz and in Alsace should have been :—

*Army of Alsace (Duke of Magenta).*

	Men.
1st corps (4 divisions of infantry) . . . . .	46,144
Head-quarters of the 1st corps . . . . .	791
1st division of mixed cavalry (of 3 brigades) . . . . .	5,003
Reserve of the 1st corps (with 8 batteries and a pontoon-train) . . . . .	3,383
Total . . . . .	<u>55,321</u>



	Men.
7th corps, 3 divisions of infantry (General Douay) . . . . .	36,806
Head-quarters of the 7th corps . . . . .	791
1st division of mixed cavalry . . . . .	3,705
Reserve of the 7th corps (with 7 batteries and a pontoon-train) . . . . .	3,047
Total . . . . .	<u>44,349</u>

*General Reserves of the Army of Alsace.*

Reserve of artillery for the 1st and 7th army-corps, comprising 10 bat- teries . . . . .	1,660
Grand field park for the army, com- posed of the 1st and 7th corps, about . . . . .	1,940
Grand park of engineers for the same army . . . . .	400
General reserve of the administrative departments . . . . .	500
General reserve of cavalry (a di- vision of cuirassiers) (General Bonne- main) . . . . .	3,371
Total . . . . .	<u>7,871</u>
Effective of the Army of Alsace . . . . .	<u>107,541</u>

*Army of Metz (Marshal Bazaine).*

3rd army-corps (4 divisions of in- fantry) . . . . .	47,868
2nd, 4th, and 5th army-corps (of 3 divisions, and 38,406 men per corps) . . . . .	113,218

	Mén.
4 head-quarters, for the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th corps, of 791 men each . . . . .	3,164
Reserve of the 3rd corps (pontoon-train and 8 batteries) . . . . .	3,383.
Reserve of the 2nd, 4th, and 5th corps (without pontoon-train), with 7 batteries per corps . . . . .	8,301
The imperial guard (making a deduction for its depôts) . . . . .	28,000
General reserve of field artillery, numbering 14 batteries, 4 of which are for the 2 divisions of cavalry in reserve . . . . .	1,812
Grand field park, calculated for the 19 divisions of the army of Metz (including the 2 divisions of infantry of the guard) . . . . .	2,500
General reserve of cavalry, comprising the division of chasseurs d'Afrique (4000 men of the effective), and 1 division of cuirassiers and dragoons (5003 men of the effective), for both the divisions . . . . .	9,003
Grand park of engineers . . . . .	450
Reserve of administrative services, about . . . . .	1,000
	<hr/>
Effective of the Army of Metz . . . . .	<u>220,699</u>

*Army of the Camp of Châlons (Marshal Canrobert).*

The 6th army-corps combined at Châlons, and intended to replace the Army of Metz, might reckon the following number of effectives :—

	Men.
For the 4 divisions of infantry . . .	47,868
For its head-quarters . . .	791
For the reserves, with 7 batteries (its pontoon-train and adminis- trative services) . . .	2,703
For its park of engineers . . .	400
1 division of mixed cavalry (3 brigades) . . .	5,003
	<hr/>
Effective of the 6th corps . . .	56,765
	<hr/>

The total effective of the armies ought therefore to have been :—

	Men.
1. The Army of Alsace . . .	107,541
2. The Army of Metz . . .	220,699
3. 6th army-corps . . .	56,765
	<hr/>
General effective of the armies . .	385,005
	<hr/>

The two Armies of Alsace and Metz and the 6th army-corps were in possession of 147 batteries, 32 of which were horse-batteries, that is, 862 cannon.

Thus, although according to the official *data* the number of fighting men was 588,000, there were reckoned only 385,000 men for the Army of the Rhine. It seemed, therefore, as if a very large allowance had been made for unfavourable eventualities. What a bitter deception the chief of this army must have experienced when, at the end of three weeks, the eight army-corps sent to the frontier did not furnish more than about 220,000 men!

This inconceivable difference between the number of men present under the colours and those who ought to have been there is the most striking and deplorable example of the vicious character of our military organi-

zation. In order to understand this, it is necessary to know that, notwithstanding the arrangements made by Marshal Niel in 1868, the ■■■■ of the reserve who were compelled to go to the dépôts, in order to be from thence sent back into the regiments, took an infinite time to rejoin their corps.

On the other hand, the *corps législatif* having always urged upon the Minister of War that permissions to marry should be granted to the men of the reserve, many of them, being no longer single men, succeeded in getting themselves exempted by the generals commanding the departments, although this exemption was in express opposition to the orders of the minister.

In spite of the order given again and again by the Emperor to distribute to the troops permanently the articles and appurtenances for camping, this measure was not put into execution. The regimental carriages, which ought during peace to have been distributed in several storehouses at chosen points in the vicinity of the frontier, were, in 1870, still accumulated for the most part at Vernon and Satory.

The infantry-corps had not in time of peace received the number of muskets corresponding to the war effective; there were 2000 supplied to them for the maximum peace effective; there should have been distributed to them from 4000 to 5000. Neither had they in store the supply of ammunition calculated for ■ war footing, of 90 cartridges per man in the ranks. The result of this must have been considerable delay before the corps received from the central magazines, and from the ordnance-department, the camping appurtenances, guns, and ammunition which were indispensable to them.

There were, besides, many other errors committed. One of the most serious was not having, before the year 1869, caused the contingents to be drilled with the new guns; for the men who formed a part of the reserve and

were acquainted only with the former arm, were strangers to the breech-loading gun, and when, in 1870, they joined their corps, they had to recommence their military education.

The service of the mitrailleuses or bullet-cannons also left much to be desired. The knowledge of the use of these new pieces had been kept secret; only Marshal Lebauf, on the recommendation of the Emperor, summoned to Meudon, in 1869, the number of captains of artillery necessary for commanding the batteries of bullet-cannons, in order that they might be made conversant with the firing and service of these pieces. Through a culpable inadvertence on the part of the ordnance department, the ministry, when the war broke out, instead of placing at the head of the batteries of mitrailleuses officers who were initiated into their use, preferred to choose others, sooner than change the order of succession of the marching officers.

The consequence was that many made an injudicious use of these mitrailleuses. Deceived by the name, they thought that they ought to be used at a short range, like cannon firing grape-shot, whilst, on the contrary, their fire is not effectual except at a distance of more than 1900 yards.

In consequence of the different causes which have just been enumerated, the transition from ■ peace establishment to ■ war establishment was much more protracted than was expected, and this was the chief source of our reverses.



## CHAPTER VI.

## COMMENCEMENT OF THE CAMPAIGN OF 1870.

THE frontiers of France being protected on the north by the neutrality of Belgium and on the east by the neutrality of Switzerland, the only lines accessible either for attack or for defence, form a triangle, the apex of which is Lauterbourg, and the sides of which, starting from this point, tend one towards the west to Sierck, the other towards the south to Belfort. The first side, which to us is the left side, runs along the frontier of Rhenish Bavaria and the Saar. It is eighty-six miles in extent in a straight line; the second or right side borders the Rhine for a distance of about a hundred miles.

A French army, taking the offensive, must necessarily in order to get into Germany cross one or other of these two lines. On the left line it might march straight on to Mayence and besiege it; on the right line it would be necessary to pass over the Rhine and invade the Grand Duchy of Baden.

As is seen, the north-east frontiers of France are very ill-fitted in a geographical point of view for aiding an attack against Germany; for whether a French army proceeds towards the north, or whether it advances towards the east, it can always be attacked on its flanks, and is obliged to employ numerous troops to cover and protect them. •

As a matter of fact, Germany, possessing both banks of the Rhine, from Cologne to Rastadt, is mistress of

the course of the river, and having at her disposal a great number of railways, she can without difficulty transfer her troops to the left bank, so that if a French army is advancing upon Mayence, it can be attacked on the right flank by a German army crossing the river at ■■■■ point or other below Rastadt, and on the left flank by the troops combined at Trèves; if, on the contrary, it marches eastward towards the Rhine, the left flank can be threatened from one side all along the line which extends from Lauterbourg to Sierck, and from the other side along the course of the river as far as Basle.

The nature of things, therefore, pointed clearly to Metz and Strasbourg as the two chief points of concentration for the army-corps, for whatever was the plan adopted, the Army of Alsace and the Army of Metz ought to combine their movements so as to unite their efforts, whether they crossed the Rhine or whether they marched towards the north. In both cases, the Army of Châlons ought to be used for a reserve and to ensure the communications of the army in the field. If circumstances compelled the French army to remain on the defensive, the troops of Alsace ought to retire on the defiles of Vosges, where the army of Metz would rejoin it.

Strasbourg did not appear to the Emperor ■ favourable point for crossing, because after having passed over the Rhine, the army would face the defiles of the Black Forest, or, if it was wished to follow the right bank of the river and take possession of the railroad, it would be necessary to undertake the siege of Rastadt. The point which seemed preferable was Maxau, which is situated about eighteen miles above the fortress of Germersheim and twelve miles below Rastadt, which would allow these two fortresses to be left, the one on the left, and the other ■■ the right.

This plan had no chance of success unless we were beforehand with the enemy in taking possession of Maxau previously to his troops being collected there. Passing a great river by main force is a hazardous operation which has seldom succeeded and ought never to be thought of.

The object to be attained consisted in first mustering on the points indicated above the various army-corps, not only with the number of men fixed beforehand, but with the essential accessories, such as carriages, parks, pontoon-trains, gun-boats, and, lastly, the indispensable supplies of provisions and *matériel*.

The concentration of the principal French forces in Alsace and Metz did not disclose to the enemy the projects of the Emperor, and allowed him, when the time came, to combine seven army-corps and, at their head, to resolutely take the offensive. But in order to do this, it was necessary that all the corps should be equally in readiness to take the field; for an army is a large body, all the various parts of which ought to afford a mutual support and act together; if only one is wanting, the whole is paralyzed and the general plan can no longer be carried out. Thus it was indispensable not only that the troops combined at Metz should be at their full complement, but it was necessary that the corps which were assembled at Belfort should have arrived at Strasbourg so as to reinforce that of Marshal MacMahon; it was requisite that the reserve corps of Marshal Canrobert, which was forming at Châlons, should have replaced in Lorraine the troops intended to enter Germany. Unfortunately the hopes which had been entertained could not be realized.

Instead of having in line, as might have been expected, 385,000 men to oppose the 430,000 of Northern Germany combined with the Southern States, the army, when the Emperor arrived at Metz on the 25th of July,

amounted to only 220,000 men, and, moreover, not only were the effectives not up to their full complement, but many indispensable accessories were wanting. The Army of the Moselle contained only 110,000 instead of 220,000 ; that of Marshal MacMahon only 40,000 instead of 107,000. The corps of General Douay at Belfort experienced great difficulties in forming ; lastly, the corps of Marshal Canrobert was not yet complete.

The Emperor saw that under such circumstances the crossing of the Rhine became impossible, and yielding, so to speak, to the impatience of the army and of the nation, he then made up his mind to march upon the Saar. On the 2nd of August the whole army occupied the following positions.

The 2nd corps, General Frossard, at Forbach ; the 3rd corps, Marshal Bazaine, at Saint-Avold ; the 4th corps, General Ladmirault, at Boulay ; the 5th corps, General de Failly, at Saarguemines ; the imperial guard was in the vicinity of Metz. The four first army-corps, consisting of nearly 80,000 men, were combined in a radius of twelve miles.

The corps of General Frossard easily took possession of the heights of Saarbruck. This affair was not of great importance, looking at the small number of the enemies' troops ; nevertheless it ensured to us the crossing of the river, which was an advantage, and enabled us to prevent the Prussian troops which were combined at Trèves from making use of the railway to convey them to the east. In this affair the Prince Imperial displayed a coolness beyond his age, but indiscreet friends having exaggerated the merit of his behaviour, the malevolent turned into ridicule that which in reality was worthy of praise.

Although the engagement at Saarbruck took place on the 2nd of August, the French army remained motionless on the 3rd and 4th. The Emperor, before he



advanced, waited until the effective of the army was augmented by the arrival of the men of the reserve, the Army of Alsace completed by a junction with the 7th corps, and, lastly, the corps from Châlons had arrived at Metz. Was it possible, in fact, to advance into ■ difficult country offering few resources before having been able to combine movements with the other army-corps? In proceeding towards Mayence, the difficulty with regard to supplies was great, for it was impossible to think of re-opening the railway, the tunnels of which, it was said, had been destroyed, and the flanks of our armies might have been molested on the left by the Prussian troops at Trèves, and on the right by those which were already at Kaiserslautern. The troops therefore remained inactive on the left bank of the Saar. But when, on the 4th of August, information was received of the check sustained at Wissembourg by the division of General Abel Douay, the Emperor immediately gave the order to concentrate the army and to call it back towards Metz, and he gave the command of the three army-corps of the Saar to Marshal Bazaine.

Consequently, the 2nd corps was ordered to leave the heights of Saarbruck and to retire to Saint-Avold; the 4th corps established its head-quarters at Boucheporn, the 2nd was to occupy Putelanges. With regard to the 5th corps, which was at Saarguemines, it was sent to Bitché, in order to place itself in communication with Marshal MacMahon. The orders of the Emperor were transmitted and executed tardily. The 2nd corps instead of retiring as far as Saint-Avold, stopped at Forbach. Besides, several divisions were placed too far apart, and time was necessary to get them together again.

Generally speaking, the Emperor pointed out to the commanders of army-corps the central position where their head-quarters were to be established, but they were free to place their divisions as they thought best. Now it



happened that several of them having unduly extended their lines, it became necessary before moving to wait until the detached divisions were concentrated. Besides this, in consequence of the bad habits acquired in Africa, the army was encumbered with baggage. You might meet waggons entirely laden with sugar and coffee, whilst indispensable articles, such as biscuit, were deficient. The men, carrying as they did enormous weights, marched but slowly; and lastly, the bad weather retarded the movements of the army.

The Emperor must then have bitterly regretted having sent the army to the north before it was perfectly ready to enter on the campaign; for, after the check at Wissembourg, he felt how important it was to be able to support the Army of Alsace. The enemy having disclosed his intentions, the most reasonable plan was to leave a strong garrison in Strasbourg and Metz, and to combine all the disposable forces behind the Vosges. But on the one hand, the Duke of Magenta signified that he was in a position to take the offensive, and that he even hoped to obtain a success; and, on the other hand, too much time was required for bringing the army back to the east; nevertheless it began to concentrate on Saint-Avold, and the 5th corps was sent from Bitche into Alsace to support the Duke of Magenta's corps.

The project of the commander-in-chief is clearly indicated by the following despatch sent by the chief of the staff on the morning of the 6th, to Marshal Bazaine:—"The intention of the Emperor is to combine with Marshal MacMahon, and at the same time to concentrate compactly the army-corps." The quick succession of events prevented the execution of this plan.

On the 6th of August, whilst the army of the Crown Prince of Prussia was overwhelming by its superior forces Marshal MacMahon's army-corps, the Prussian troops

debouched from Saarbruck and Saarlouis in order to attack the French army.

The 2nd corps, by itself in its position at Spicheren, had to sustain the efforts of the Prussians. But although the French army was attacked just as it was retiring, the 2nd corps was not left to itself; it might easily have been assisted by three divisions which were in a position to reach the field of battle in two hours. Montaudon's division was at Saarguemines, about six miles away; Castagny's division was at Putelanges, about nine miles away; and Mettmann's division was at Marienthal, about eight miles away.

During this unfortunate day, in which the corps of General Frossard fought heroically, fate would have it that no assistance arrived time enough to change a defeat into a victory.

After the battle of the 6th, orders were still more urgently given to concentrate the army to the north of Metz. On the 10th it took up a very strong position on the left bank of the *French Nied*, with the intention of awaiting the enemy; but the Emperor having been to reconnoitre the ground, and finding that the right flank might be easily turned, and all the more since a German corps was already advancing by Saar-Union, resolved to

concentrate the army more to the rear, under the protection of the advanced forts of Metz. On the 11th, all the troops had taken up their position in the intrenched camp, and during the day of the 12th, the greatest part of the 6th corps, commanded by Marshal Canrobert, arrived from the camp at Châlons.

The hour of the most painful trials was now at hand. Only judge what grief a sovereign must feel when, being at the head of an army full of vigour and enthusiasm, he finds it impossible to employ advantageously its ardour and its devotion! All his projects had been brought to nought by the delay which occurred in the

formation of the corps. The vigorous initiative taken by the Prussians obliged the army to retreat, after having advanced as far as the frontier.

All those movements which appeared to be the result of hesitation, and on which a severe judgment was passed both by the soldiers in the ranks and also by the public, produced an effect unfavourable to the Emperor. Although fatigued by toilsome marches, and affected by the checks experienced at Wissembourg, Froeschwiller, and Spicheren, the army expressed but one desire, that of marching forward. But he who bore the responsibility of the chief command did not think that he ought to yield to this feeling, a very natural one in men who are fully conscious of their strength and valour.

The Emperor was, it is true enough, at the head of 120,000 men, well disciplined and ready to undertake anything ; but three hostile armies, each of which was stronger than his own, were advancing against him ; on the north the army of General Steinmetz and that of Prince Frederick Charles, on the east that of the Crown Prince of Prussia ; the cavalry-corps of these three armies had already effected their junction, and had made their appearance in the environs of Faulquemont. If the French army accepted battle whilst advancing towards the Saar, it might have been cut off from Metz by the troops of the Crown Prince ; if, on the contrary, it marched towards the Vosges, it might be compromised by the armies of Prince Frederick Charles and General Steinmetz.

Certainly now, at the present time, when we have witnessed the whole development of the sad consequences of the campaign, it might be said that it would have been better for the Emperor to fall valiantly at the head of his 120,000 men, than to be brought by the force of events to the capitulations of Metz and Sedan ; but who could then foresee the extent to which our misfortunes would reach ?

The events which we have just related diminished the confidence of the troops in the Chief of the State ; for the military reputation which he had acquired during the short Italian campaign was not established sufficiently well to resist evil fortune. At Paris these events produced effects still more pernicious. Public opinion made Marshal Lebœuf responsible for the delays which occurred in the formation of the army, and the opposition urgently demanded that the Emperor should give up the command in chief. Under these circumstances nothing but an important success could have shut the mouths of his opponents, but this success was now a thing hardly to be hoped for. The Emperor was compelled to adopt the resolution of accepting the resignation of Marshal Lebœuf, and on the 13th of August he transferred the command of the army of the Rhine to Marshal Bazaine, who possessed the confidence both of the army and of the country.

Although the Emperor placed under the orders of Marshal Bazaine all the troops combined at Metz, nevertheless, according to the constitution, he remained none the less the supreme chief of the army, and, in a position similar to that occupied by the King of Prussia, he might direct the general defence of the country ; but in Paris, the government, being exposed to the attacks of the opposition, the violence of which increased with our reverses, found itself compelled to make all kinds of concessions.

On the 11th of August, M. de Kératry demanded the impeachment of Marshal Lebœuf, but the *corps législatif* did not accept his proposition. On the 12th, Count de Palikao announced to the Chamber that Marshal Lebœuf had given in his resignation, and on the 13th, he stated that Marshal Bazaine was commanding the army of the Rhine. At this sitting M. Gambetta demanded that the war should be conducted on *republican principles*.



To the question of M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, asking if Marshal Bazaine's command extended likewise to the imperial guard, the Minister of war replied in the affirmative ; and when M. Guyot Montpayroux insisted upon knowing whether there were not other commands either above or along with that of the Marshal, Count de Palikao asserted that there were no others. "Then," cried M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, "Marshal Bazaine is Generalissimo ; that will reassure the country !"

It was evident that the ministers, harassed as they were by the perfidious attacks of the opposition, were, in spite of their zeal and their devotion, powerless to defend the Emperor. Everything, then, induced him to return to Paris, but he was unwilling to execute this project before the Army of the Rhine quitted Metz.

On the 13th of August, Marshal Bazaine acquainted the Emperor that he should follow the plan already fixed upon, which consisted in taking the whole of the army along the left bank of the Moselle so as to reach Verdun, and thence to march to Châlons in order to join the troops which were assembling there.

On the morning of the 14th the movement of retreat commenced. Two army-corps had already arrived on the left bank of the river, and the Emperor had fixed his head-quarters at Longeville, when, in the evening, the sound of cannon announced that the portion of the army left upon the right bank were being attacked. As it was under the protection of the forts, the hope might have been entertained that the movement of retreat might not be stopped ; but several divisions recrossed the right bank in order to take part in the struggle ; so that the battle of Borny, although glorious to our arms, delayed the crossing of the troops for several hours.

Nevertheless, on the morning of the 15th, the march to Verdun was resumed. There are three roads which lead from Metz to Verdun : the first, which is the most



direct and more to the south, passes through Gravelotte, Rezonville, Mars-la-Tour, Harville, and Haudimont. The second, leaving Gravelotte, turns to the right and passes through Conflans and Etain; lastly, the third, which is more to the north, passes through Sainte-Marie-aux-Chênes and Briey, joining the second road at Etain.

Presuming that the enemy would not have had time to cross to the left bank of the Moselle, Marshal Bazaine had contemplated conducting the army to Verdun by the two first roads. On the morning of the 15th the Emperor and the Prince Imperial were compelled hastily to quit their lodging, where several officers had just been killed by the projectiles of a hostile battery. On the evening of the 15th they were established with a portion of the army at Gravelotte.

There being no telegraph on this line, Napoleon III. could not receive any news from the capital; and it was in order to place himself in communication with Paris that he decided to precede the army to Châlons, and left on the 16th, at four o'clock in the morning, with an escort of two regiments of cavalry of the guard. On the evening before, a general action on the morrow was so little foreseen, that it was settled for the Emperor to take the shortest route; but Marshals Bazaine and Canrobert induced him to go by Conflans and Etain. On this road none of the enemy were, in fact, encountered, except a few Uhlans, who immediately made off. The Emperor arrived at Verdun on the 16th, at three o'clock, and on the evening of the same day at the camp of Châlons. Whilst there he heard of the glorious but fruitless battles of Rezonville and Saint-Privat, and he felt a mortal regret that he had not taken a part in them.

## CHAPTER VII.

MEETING AT THE CAMP OF CHALONS—MARCH FROM RHEIMS  
TOWARDS METZ.

THERE are situations which are swayed by the inflexible logic of circumstances, in spite of all human foresight and the most loyal intentions.

When, just as he was leaving for the war, the Emperor instituted a Regency at Paris, he knew that he was leaving behind him a woman well worthy of filling the part she was called upon to play. He thought, however, that from the imperial head-quarters he might still be able to guide the course of public affairs ; but, by virtue of the new form of government, he in reality abandoned the power with which he had been invested.

According to the precedent of the First Empire, the regency ought not to have come into action until the moment when the Emperor had quitted French territory. This is what took place in 1859, during the Italian campaign. But in 1870 it was decided that the regency should exist *de facto*, as soon as the Emperor left Paris ; and, although by the letters patent the Empress had but restricted powers, as she presided over a ministry declared responsible by the constitution, it necessarily followed that there were fundamentally two governments ; one with the army, possessing all the attributes of sovereignty, but not having by its side any of the legal intermediate agents for exercising this sovereignty ; the other at Paris, surrounded by all those in whom

authority was vested, but not possessing all the prerogatives of power.

Thus the regent had not the right either of convoking the Chambers, changing the ministers, nominating to any high office, military or civil, or of exercising the privilege of pardon; and yet she had by her side a responsible ministry. This abnormal position of things could not fail to lead to matters being very differently estimated and to contrary decisions being given.

Thus it was that the Chambers were convoked without the consent of the Emperor being asked by the Ministers. The latter, it is true, believed that they were authorized to do this, because Napoleon III., in his parting address to the *corps législatif*, had told the deputies that, if grave circumstances required it, the Empress would summon them round her. Nevertheless, there could be no legal convocation in the absence of a decree signed by the Emperor.

To assemble the Chambers after military reverses have taken place means, in France, nothing less than invoking revolution; for at the time of public misfortunes, the passions become the ruling element; the opposition sees its influence increasing in direct proportion to the reverses of the country, and so far from supporting the government from motives of patriotism, it seeks every opportunity to weaken and overthrow it.

The first result of the assembling of the *corps législatif* was the fall of Ollivier, the Minister. The Empress asked the Emperor's permission by telegraph to form a new ministry, a request which was acceded to; but the result of this was, that, contravening the constitution, the ministers were chosen without the participation of the Emperor; and the former, when they entered upon their offices, being urged by necessity, found themselves compelled to nominate to all the vacant places, to select

the generals-in-chief, and, in short, to decide everything without reference to the Emperor.

In fortunate times, the difficulties in government that we have just pointed out would vanish, for it is easy to come to an agreement on the measures to be taken when success has enhanced the legitimate influence of the Chief of the State; but after unhappy events have occurred it is quite a different thing. Moral force no longer dwells with the armies, it reverts to the public powers, the seat of which is in the capital. This is so true, that Napoleon I. himself, although he was absolute master and surrounded by an unexampled prestige, felt that, after reverses had occurred, the greatest danger threatening the order of established institutions was to be found no longer in front of the enemy, but in Paris, and he hastened thither after the disasters of Moscow, and also after those of Waterloo.

The intention of Napoleon III. was, therefore, to return to the capital, in order to resume the reins of government. Nevertheless, one thought predominated in his mind, and this was to do nothing that could impede the national defence. Confident of the energy and patriotism of the Empress, he was unwilling to return to the Tuileries unless his presence would add strength to the government, and not become a source of division and troubles.

Having arrived at the camp of Châlons on the 16th of August, the Emperor found there General Trochu, who had been invested by the Minister of War with the command of the troops which were assembling there. On the 18th Marshal MacMahon arrived with the remains of his army-corps.

These two general-officers were summoned by the Emperor to a council, at which were present Prince Napoleon, Colonel Schmitz, General Trochu's chief of the staff, and General Berthaud, commanding the *garde mobile* of Paris.

At this meeting it was decided that, in order not to oppose General de Palikao's declaration to the *corps législatif*, and to satisfy public opinion, which demanded unity of command, Marshal Bazaine should be nominated by the Emperor generalissimo of all the French forces. Although the Duke of Magenta was senior in rank to Marshal Bazaine, he did not wish to allow a personal question to weigh against the interests of the country, and consented with ■ good grace to this arrangement, imitating in this the example of disinterestedness set by Marshal Canrobert at Metz. Still, in the position in which Marshal Bazaine then stood, this nomination was a fallacious one ; therefore, as soon as he learnt the extent of the power with which he had just been invested, he hastened to write to Marshal MacMahon that he was unable, from the place where he was, to direct the movements of any other army but his own, and that, in consequence, he left him free to act as he thought best.

The Duke of Magenta was naturally designated as the commander-in-chief of the army of Châlons, and it was decided that he should retire towards the capital. General Trochu, of whose loyalty no one then entertained any doubt, was at the same time nominated governor of Paris.

A long discussion took place to know what had best be done with the 15,000 national *gardes mobile* of Paris who were then at the camp. It was unanimously acknowledged that it was impossible to amalgamate them with the army, into which they would introduce a want of discipline, and that it was equally impossible to leave them at Châlons. General Berthaud declared that, with the exception of two battalions, which could be sent to some fortress, he would answer for the subordination of the others if they were allowed to return near Paris. General Trochu urged that this should be done, and it was decided that they should be sent to the camp



of St. Maur, near Vincennes. It was added, besides, that it was indispensable that all their camping materials should be taken from them and distributed to the regular troops who were deficient in them.

With regard to the Emperor, as he no longer commanded the army, his proper place was at the head of the government. He therefore adopted the resolution to proceed to the capital as soon as he had come to an understanding on the point with the government of the Regent.

When these intentions were communicated at Paris grave objections were raised there. Certain men, whose opinions carried great weight in the Emperor's mind, submitted to him the following considerations :—

“ If the Chief of the State returned to Paris after a success, he would arrive there with all the moral force necessary for re-establishing confidence, raising the courage of the people, and subduing their evil passions ; but to return to the Tuileries after painful reverses had occurred, to abandon the army and to be compelled to fight, perhaps in the streets, with the fomentors of disorder, would be a part very unfitting for him to play. At the point to which matters have now reached, it is evident that a dictatorship is necessary ; and yet the prestige of the Emperor has been weakened too much for him to be able to possess himself of the requisite powers. In order to save the country it might be necessary to have recourse to the most energetic measures, perhaps to modify the ministry, to dissolve the *corps législatif*, and to treat with rigour many individuals who are for the moment in the enjoyment of popular favour. These measures, although legal, would have the semblance of a *coup d'état*, and does the Emperor think that public opinion would be with him in this course of action ? Added to this there is no longer in Paris any armed force on which the Emperor could reckon. The fact of

sending thither the national *garde mobile*, which is animated by a bad feeling, has farther increased the difficulty. General Trochu has told the Emperor that the moment had come for taking manly resolutions. This advice is correct, with a proviso that these resolutions do not produce an effect contrary to that which is expected from them.

“Let the Emperor remember all that happened after Waterloo to the glorious chief of his family. Napoleon I. returned to Paris with the determination to save the country ; but, looking at the attitude of the Chambers and the hostility of politicians, he himself shrank from the idea of having recourse to exceptional measures towards Frenchmen when the foreigner was advancing on the capital.”

These considerations, which were not deficient in justice, altered the intentions of the Emperor ; he reluctantly made up his mind not to abandon MacMahon's army, whatever might be its destination, whether it retired on Paris or marched towards Metz. His position, nevertheless, was the most painful in which any sovereign ever found himself. Although Chief of the State and responsible to the French people, he was deprived by the force of events of the rights which he held from the nation, and condemned to impotence, when he saw before his eyes his armies and his government on the road to destruction.

The position of the Empress was still more critical. Alone in the midst of a fermenting population, which any incident whatever might rouse to action against her, without any devoted troops at her disposal, and without any general who possessed her confidence, she found herself at the head of a hesitating ministry, and face to face with a *corps législatif* already almost factious. One feeling alone sustained her courage, and this was the thought that she was responding to the confidence

reposed in her by the country and the Emperor ; and although she did not shut her eyes to the fact that she was occupying a most perilous position, she preferred to stand alone in it to having her husband and son also involved.

According to the arrangements which had been entered into, on the 21st of August Marshal MacMahon commenced his movement of retreat, and a large portion of the army encamped in the evening behind Rheims.

On the same day an eminent personage arrived from Paris, to urge upon the Emperor and the Marshal the necessity of the army hastening to the succour of Marshal Bazaine. The Duke of Magenta adduced, in opposition, the following reasons :—He was ignorant whether Marshal Bazaine had provisions and ammunition sufficient even to hold out a few days longer ; he might be obliged to capitulate before the succouring army joined him ; even allowing that Marshal Bazaine could cut his way through the lines of the enemy, would he march towards the north or towards the south ? In such a state of uncertainty, how could a dangerous movement be commenced with troops still imperfectly organized ? Supposing even that by good fortune the junction of the two armies should be effected, was this result preferable to that which would be obtained by having an army under the walls of Paris manœuvring to prevent the investment of a capital containing 300,000 combatants ?

. It was therefore settled that Marshal MacMahon should continue his march towards Soissons or Paris ; but the next day, the 22nd, a despatch arrived from Marshal Bazaine which seemed full of confidence, and announced that he hoped to resume the offensive, and to cut his way to Montmédy. This news caused a change in the resolutions agreed upon ; and the Duke of Magenta immediately sought the Emperor, in order to tell him that, now the position of Bazaine was known,

an attempt might be made to join him, the opinion at Paris and also of the army being in favour of this movement. The Emperor, though with regret, acceded to this project, deciding henceforth to give himself up to the course of events. He confined himself simply to advising the Marshal not to go far away from the railway line, which would insure his supplies of stores.

Thus, therefore, although the Duke of Magenta obeyed in a great measure the injunctions sent from Paris, still it was the news received from Metz on the 22nd which caused him to alter his plans, and decided him to run the chance which was presented to him.

When the march to Metz was once decided upon, it was clear that it had no chance of success, unless considerable celerity were used in doing the 110 miles which had to be travelled. But the four corps which formed the army of Châlons were in no very favourable state for moving with promptitude. The 1st corps (General Ducrot) was composed of good troops, but they were fatigued, and still suffering under the impression of the check received at Froeschwiller. The 5th corps (General de Failly), although it had not yet been in action, was exhausted by a long and tiresome march. The 7th corps (General Douay), which had been formed in haste, was not consolidated as might have been wished. The 12th corps (General Le Brun) included two good divisions, the first being formed of old regiments, and the second of four regiments of marine infantry; but the third was composed of four "made up" regiments, the soldiers of which were completely deficient in military instruction.

Added to this, most of the corps were unprovided with the most indispensable necessities.

Such was the army with which an attempt was about to be made to effect an operation that none but well-



The most simple means that offered for conveying the army to the north-east was the railway from Rheims which passes by Rethel, Mézières, Sedan, Montmédy, Longuyon, and Thionville ; but the rolling-stock being insufficient, the Duke of Magenta did not think he could avail himself of the railroad.

Allowing that the army travelled without interruption twelve miles a day, a distance which for an army is a forced march, they could not present themselves under the walls of Metz before the expiration of nine days.

The question therefore was to know whether, during this journey, the enemy would not have time to assemble either on the flank or at the rear of our army. Let us examine what the position of the enemy then was.

The King of Prussia had divided his troops into four armies ; the first two, under the commands of Prince Frederick Charles and General Steinmetz, were blockading Metz with 180,000 men. The two others, about 210,000 strong, under the Prince Royal of Saxony and the Crown Prince of Prussia, were advancing towards the camp of Châlons and Paris.

When the march of Marshal MacMahon was made known on the evening of the 25th at the Prussian headquarters, the army of the Prince of Saxony formed the right wing, and had already occupied the defiles of Argonne ; the head-quarters were at Clermont, in Argonne. The Prince of Prussia's head-quarters were at Bar-le-Duc.

The French army commenced its flank march on the 23rd of August, and on the morning of the 26th the German army undertook a change of front on their right, bringing the left wing forward.

If, then, we suppose that both the French and German armies marched each at the rate of twelve miles a day, the first army which left Rheims on the 23rd might in eight days have been at Briey, between Longuyon and



Metz, having travelled 100 miles; the second army, leaving Bar-le-Duc on the 26th, might in five days have reached the same spot, having only had sixty miles to travel. In fact, on the 27th the King of Prussia had established his head-quarters at Clermont, in Argonne. Thus, although Marshal MacMahon's army had, by a happy chance, commenced its march three days earlier than the Prussians, there was every probability that, before arriving in front of the lines at Metz, it would come in contact with the two armies of the Princes of Prussia and Saxony.

We will now resume the principal facts of the campaign.

On the 23rd the army quitted the environs of Rheims, and, taking its course to the east, encamped on the Suippe. The head-quarters were established at Béthiniville.<sup>1</sup>

The Duke of Magenta, being persuaded that his orders had been executed, and that all the army-corps were equally provided with food for several days, had thought that he might diverge from the line of railway; but, having ascertained that the 5th and 12th corps were without provisions, he was obliged to take an oblique course to the left, and to send these two corps towards **Réthel**, where the head-quarters was established on the 24th of August.

On the 25th the whole of the day was employed in distributing provisions. During this time the 1st corps proceeded to Attigny, and the 7th to Vouziers, where they arrived on the 25th; so that at this date the whole army was occupying the heights which run along the left bank of the Aisne.

From Réthel the head-quarters was moved on the

<sup>1</sup> During this campaign, after leaving the camp of Châlons, Marshal MacMahon always placed his head-quarters at the side of that of the Emperor.

26th to Tourteron, as well ■ the 12th corps ; the 5th was directed to Neuville ; the 1st. to Sémuy, five miles from Attigny, on the right bank of the Aisne ; the 7th corps remained at Vouziers.

On the 27th of August the information sent by the advanced guard of the 7th corps having led to the belief that the enemy was present in imposing force in the direction of Grand-Pré, the army was placed so as to be able to support the 7th corps, which was still at Vouziers. In consequence, the 1st corps took up its position at the rear of Quatre-Champs and Terron, the 5th at Châtillon and Belleville, the 12th at Chesne-Populeux, where the head-quarters was established.

Thus, on the 27th, the army was combined on each side of the canal which connects the Aisne and the Meuse ; but if it was to continue its march towards the east, whilst the enemy was already occupying in force the important pass of Stenay on the Meuse, the disadvantages of a flank march would present themselves with all their attendant dangers.

It is evident that an army of 80,000 or 100,000 men, with its artillery and its baggage, advances but very slowly if it can only march along one road. It is therefore most necessary that the different army-corps should proceed as far as possible parallel to the principal line of operation. When ■ army has the enemy in front of it, the various columns can by easy movements give mutual support to each other ; but, when the enemy is on your flank, all movements become difficult and dangerous, because the different corps are threatened with attack separately and in bad positions. If, for instance, the column which is closest to the enemy wishes to approach the centre column, it cannot do it without abandoning the principal line of operation, and it is obliged to adopt a prejudicial formation, in which the embarrassment which is always occasioned by the baggage is very con-

siderably increased; for whether it is placed either at the head or in the middle of the troops, it delays or even stops their march; if it is placed in the rear, it runs risk of being attacked or carried off by the enemy. This is what unfortunately we soon had to experience.

The Duke of Magenta, full of anxiety as to the position of his army, and having been informed that the Crown Prince of Prussia had combined his forces with those of the Prince Royal of Saxony, saw that the enemy had been too quick for him, and resolved, in order to save the only army which France still had at its disposal, to proceed in the direction of Mézières, and gave orders to this effect. But during the night he received formal orders from the Minister of War to continue his march towards Metz. "If you abandon Marshal Bazaine," said General Palikao, "a revolution will break out in Paris; it is not the Prince of Prussia that you have in front of you, but one of his lieutenants; you are two, perhaps three days beforehand; the Ministry calls upon you to persevere in your first resolution." It may readily be perceived how ill-informed the Ministry was. The Emperor, who shared entirely in Marshal MacMahon's opinion, might have opposed this advice, almost indeed order, that had come from Paris; but resigned as he was to undergo all the consequences of the position in which events had placed him, he left him to whom he had given up the command entirely free to act as he thought best.

It was therefore decided that the army should resume its march to Montmédy. The corps and the baggage, which had already taken the road for Mézières, were recalled in the night, and on the 28th the head-quarters was removed to Stone. The 12th corps encamped at this place and at Besace; the 1st occupied Chesne-Populeux; the 7th, Boult-aux-Bois, on the road from Vouziers to Buzancy; the 5th, Belval.

As the enemy was occupying Stenay, the Meuse could not be crossed except below this place ; but in order to carry out this crossing dangerous movements had to be executed, of which we shall speak presently.

On the 29th the 1st corps proceeded from Chesne-Populeux to Raucourt, where head-quarters was established ; the rear-guard and the baggage-train had been annoyed by the enemy during the march. In the evening the 12th corps crossed the Meuse at Mouzon without molestation ; the 5th corps, which had a toilsome march from Belval to Beaumont, placing its baggage-train at the rear of the column, had to engage in several skirmishes ; the 7th corps, which, starting from Boulton-aux-Bois, ought to have reached Buzancy, stopped at Ochel ; it had following it several hundred requisition-carriages which delayed its march, the fire of the enemy throwing the baggage-trains into disorder.

According to the Marshal's orders the passage of the Meuse ought to have been effected during the 30th in the following way :—the 12th corps only had been since the evening before on the right bank at Mouzon ; the 1st corps was to cross the Meuse from Raucourt to Remilly and occupy Carignan, the place designated for the head-quarters ; the 5th corps, which was at Beaumont, was ordered to reach Mouzon ; the 7th corps, which was at Ochel, was to proceed by Stone to Villers, where a bridge of boats had been built. But when the 5th corps, having been surprised at Beaumont, was thrown back in disorder on Mouzon, only a feeble succour could be afforded it by the 12th corps, which was on the right bank of the river. The 7th corps, which was but a little distance off, might, instead of crossing the Meuse at Villers, have faced the enemy, and fallen on their left wing, which was engaged at Beaumont ; but being entangled in the defiles of Stone and Raucourt, and encumbered with baggage-trains which had been thrown



into disorder by the enemy's shells, its movements were impeded, and it made its way to Remilly, and even in part fell back on Sedan.

Thus, the army-corps were either attacked separately, without their being able to afford one another mutual support, or they were thrown into disorder without coming into action. Such was the grievous result of ■ flank march undertaken with partially drilled troops.

At four o'clock in the evening of the 30th the Emperor and the Duke of Magenta met on the heights of Mouzon, where the 12th corps was in position. They had both of them dismounted. The cannon of General de Failly's corps might be heard in the distance, and General Pajol, who had been reconnoitring in order to judge of the state of things, brought the news that the 5th corps were retiring on Mouzon. The Marshal then told the Emperor that the whole of the army would soon have crossed over to the right bank of the Meuse, and that he himself was unwilling to leave Mouzon until this operation was completed ; but, as all was going on well, he urged the Emperor to proceed to Carignan, where the 1st corps ought to have arrived and the head-quarters would be.

Napoleon III. left, therefore, full of confidence in the result of the day ; but scarcely an hour after his arrival ■ Carignan, General Ducrot came and communicated to him the most alarming news ; the 5th corps had been driven back in disorder upon Mouzon, and the brigade sent to its assistance had been swept away in its flight. The Marshal also sent to tell the Emperor to proceed as soon as possible to Sedan, whither the army was retiring. The Emperor could scarcely believe that the scene had changed so completely in ■ few hours ; he wished, however, to remain with the 1st corps ; but at the entreaty of General Ducrot, he made up his mind to take the railway, and arrived at Sedan at eleven o'clock in the evening. It was proposed to him to continue his journey .



to Mézières, and to avail himself of the railway which was still open. He might there rally the corps of General Vinoy and establish a fresh centre of resistance in one of the fortified places of the north; but he thought that he might be accused of placing his own person in safety, and preferred to share the lot of the army, whatever it might be. His carriages and escort having remained at Carignan, the Emperor, followed by his aides-de-camp, and amidst the silence of night, made his way on foot into the town of Sedan, which was so soon to be the scene of such terrible events.

Sedan, which is classed as a fortified place, is situated on the right bank of the Meuse; the suburb of Torcy only is on the left bank, and is covered by an advanced work which forms a vast *tête-de-pont*. The town, which owing to the short range of ancient ordnance, used to be protected by the hills which surround it, is now exposed to any hostile force of artillery placed on the heights which rise on both banks of the Meuse; it was, moreover, incompletely armed, badly supplied with provisions and stores, and was unprovided with any out-works. On the right bank of the river two streams, the Floing below and the Givonne above the town, flow into the river almost at right angles to its course; one running from the village of Illy to that of Floing, and the other from the village of Givonne to that of Bazeilles; they surround the ground on which the battle was about to be fought. The culminating points are the "Calvary" of Illy, near the village of that name, and the wood of Givonne, situated to the west of the village of Givonne. The only road remaining open to communicate with Mézières was a departmental road which passes through the villages of Floing, Saint-Albert, Vrine-aux-Bois, and Tumécourt.

If it was wished to retreat on Mézières, it would have been necessary to occupy in force the very narrow defile

which extends from Floing in the direction of Vrigneaux-Bois, and leaving Sedan to itself, to rest the right of the line on the heights of Illy and Givonne.

General Ducrot, it is necessary to understand, had well considered the position, and the "Calvary" of Illy was a spot where he desired to establish the centre of the defence. Nevertheless, on the 31st of August, the troops were posted all round the town; they occupied a semicircle, the radius of which, taking Sedan as the centre, was about 3300 yards, and the extremities of which touched the villages of Bazeilles and Floing.

The result of this semicircular position necessarily was that the line of retreat tended to the centre, and that, if the troops were repulsed, they must by a natural instinct rush towards the town, which would then become a kind of funnel into which they would be drawn. Above and on the north of Sedan there are the remains of an abandoned intrenchment called the "old camp," which commands the surrounding ravines; and all the ground which stretches to the north of this camp is covered, according to what was said by General Ducrot, "with fence-walls, gardens, hedges, and a certain number of houses, which are connected with those at the farther end of Givonne, making this place a perfect labyrinth. If defended by a few well-disciplined troops it would be very difficult for an enemy to make himself master of it; but, on the other hand, if any corps when repulsed and in disorder came to seek shelter there, it would be impossible to rally and reform them."

It was on this uneven ground which we have just described that the battle commenced on the morning of the 1st of September. The enemy attacked at once both wings of our army, evidently seeking to surround us and cut off all retreat.

Marshal the Duke of Magenta had immediately proceeded to the outposts and had sent to apprise the

Emperor of the fact. The latter mounted on horseback, followed by his staff and escorted by a platoon of *guides*.

It may be readily comprehended what the moral state of his mind was. No longer exercising the functions of commander-in-chief, he was not supported by the feeling of responsibility which inspires the soul of him who commands ; neither did he feel the absorbing excitement which is experienced by those who obey, and know that their devotion may lead on to victory. As ■ powerless spectator of a desperate struggle, and with the conviction that either his life or his death were, on this fatal day, equally useless for the public safety, he rode on to the field of battle with that frigid resignation which faces danger without weakness but also without enthusiasm.

Whilst leaving the *sous-préfecture*, the Emperor met Marshal MacMahon who was being brought in wounded in an ambulance carriage. After exchanging a few words with him, the Emperor proceeded towards the village of Bazeilles, where the division of marine infantry was sharply engaged. At Balan, General de Vassoigne gave him an account of the position of the troops. As the crowd of officers round him drew down upon him the fire of the enemy's artillery, the Emperor left his escort and most of his aides-de-camp with a battalion of chasseurs sheltered behind a wall, and made his way, followed by four persons, to a bare and elevated spot of ground, from whence the greater part of the battle-field could be embraced by the eye.

At this moment General Ducrot, to whom Marshal MacMahon had given up the command, was executing a movement of retreat, which, under the circumstances, then existing, was the best thing to be done. The Emperor sent to him Captain d'Hendecourt, one of his orderly officers, to know the direction in which he intended to lead the troops. This young officer, full of eagerness, did not return, having probably been carried

off by ■ shell ; the whole of the spot on which the Emperor stood was furrowed up by the enemy's projectiles bursting on every side.

After remaining several hours on the ground between Moncelle and Givonne, the Emperor wished to join the lines of infantry which were to be seen on the heights, but he was separated from them by an impassable ravine ; in order to reach them it was necessary to make ■ circuit, which led him to a locality intersected with deeply sunk roads, hedges, and garden fences, which formed the labyrinth of which we spoke above. In the ravine which is called the "*fond de Givonne*," the roads were choked up with wounded men carried on ambulances, and by a park of artillery which closed up all the outlets, and through which Goze's division could only with difficulty make its way. On arriving near the old intrenched camp, it was impossible to push on any farther, and the infantry which occupied this position were retiring in good order towards the town. It was already evident that every line of retreat had been cut off by the enemy, who occupied the outside of the circle, so that the projectiles aimed towards the centre struck the troops both in front and rear. Many of the soldiers, pretending that they had no more cartridges, made their way to the only gate of the town which remained open.

After having been for nearly five hours ■ witness of ■ struggle the ultimate issue of which might be easily foreboded, the Emperor, despairing of being able, from the spot where he then was, to reach the heights of Illy, made up his mind to return to the town, with the intention of having an interview with the wounded Marshal, and in the hope of being able to get out of the town again by the gate which leads to Mézières by the departmental road. Three officers of his staff had been wounded and were carried by soldiers ; and thus it was that he reached the *sous-préfecture*, several shells having



exploded in front of his horse without touching him. He immediately sent to have a reconnoissance made of the road by which he intended to leave the town ; but information was brought to him that the Mézières gate was barricaded, and that it was impossible to pass through it ; also that the streets through which he had just passed were already obstructed by crowds of men, horses, and carriages of every description. He was, therefore, compelled to remain in the town and to wait the course of events. About three o'clock an officer from General Wimpffen, who, as the senior general, had assumed the chief command, succeeded in reaching the *sous-préfecture* after great difficulty. He came to propose to the Emperor to place himself at the head of the troops that could be assembled, and to endeavour to force a way through the enemy towards Carignan. The first impulse of Napoleon III. was to accept this proposition, but he soon saw that, apart from the difficulty of going out on horseback in the midst of the obstructions which choked up the streets, it was not becoming in him either to sacrifice the lives of many soldiers in the attempt to save himself, or to escape with the commander-in-chief, abandoning the rest of the army, and leaving it without guidance and exposed to certain destruction. The Emperor, therefore, refused the offer made by General Wimpffen.

In the meantime, affairs were assuming a ~~more~~ and more serious character ; the heroic but fruitless charges of the cavalry had been unable to stop the advance of the enemy. The brave General Margueritte, who had been mortally wounded, begged to be carried into the Emperor's presence. At this moment the surrounding hills on both banks of the Meuse were lined with several hundred cannon, which, by a converging fire, threw their projectiles into the town. Houses were burning, roofs were being torn into fragments, and death was making nume-



rous victims, both among the men crowded in the streets, and also in the barracks which had been converted into hospitals, and in the courts, where soldiers belonging to all the corps had taken refuge.

While all this was going on the commanders of the three army-corps, Generals Lebrun, Douay, and Ducrot, came in succession to the Emperor, to state to him that any further resistance had become impossible, for the soldiers, who had fought for twelve hours without either rest or food, were disheartened, and all those who had not been able to enter the town were crowded into the ditches and against the walls of the place, and that it was necessary some resolution should be arrived at.

From the time he left Châlons down to the present juncture, the Emperor had made a point of not interfering in any way whatever in the arrangements and resolutions of the general-in-chief to whom he had transferred the command ; but, at this supreme moment, when by an unprecedented fatality 80,000 men seemed reduced to the necessity of dying without being able to fight, he recollected that he was still the Sovereign who was charged with the care of lives, and that he ought not to allow the massacre before his face of men who might afterwards be of service to the country.

Napoleon III. sent one of his aides-de-camp to the top of the citadel in order to satisfy himself of the real state of things ; this officer found the utmost difficulty in making his way thither ; the streets and even the citadel were filled with soldiers who had taken refuge there. The report brought by the aide-de-camp confirmed all that the generals had said. The Emperor, in consequence, sent General Lebrun to General de Wimpffen with the advice to ask for a suspension of hostilities, which, if it was granted, would allow time for picking up the wounded and considering what was to be done.

As General Lebrun did not return, and the number of

victims increased without cessation, the Emperor took upon himself to cause a flag of truce to be hoisted. In deciding upon this step Napoleon III. fully comprehended all the gravity of the responsibility that he was incurring, and foresaw the accusations which would be heaped upon him. The whole momentous character of the situation was evident to his mind, and the reminiscence of a glorious past tended by its contrast with the present to augment its bitterness. How could the idea be admitted that the armies of Sebastopol and Solferino had been compelled to lay down their arms! How was the world to be made to understand that, when troops are confined within a narrow space, the more numerous they are the greater the confusion, and the less possible it is to re-establish the regularity indispensable for fighting? The prestige which the French army rightly enjoyed was, then, about to be suddenly destroyed, and face to face with an unexampled calamity, the Emperor, although he was a stranger to the resolutions that had been taken, remained alone responsible in the sight of the world for all the misfortunes which the war was about to involve. And just as if, at this momentous crisis, nothing should be wanting which could add to the gravity of the situation, General de Wimpffen sent in his resignation to the Emperor, so that the disbanded army found itself without a chief and devoid of guidance at a time when the greatest energy was necessary for re-establishing a slight degree of order, and thus treating with the enemy with a chance of success. The resignation was not accepted, and the general-in-chief recognized that, having commanded during the battle, duty compelled him not to abandon his post in the midst of such critical circumstances.

Whilst the flag of truce was being hoisted, a Prussian officer demanded to be conducted to head-quarters. It was ascertained from him that his sovereign was before

the gates of the town ; and, on the other hand, the King of Prussia was likewise in ignorance that Napoleon III. was within the walls of Sedan.

Under these circumstances the Emperor thought that the only course left for him to take was to address himself personally to the sovereign of North Germany.

It had been so frequently stated in the newspapers that the King of Prussia was making war against the Emperor and not against France, that Napoleon III. was persuaded that, by disappearing from the scene and placing himself in the hands of the conqueror, he would obtain conditions less disadvantageous for the army, and at the same time afford to the Regent greater facility for concluding peace at Paris. He sent, therefore, by one of his aides-de-camp, a letter to the King of Prussia, in which he announced to him that he delivered up to him his sword.<sup>1</sup>

The king, surrounded by the whole of his staff, received General Reille, and appeared surprised that the letter did not contain the surrender of the place and of the army ; but, after he became acquainted that the command-in-chief was exercised by General de Wimpffen, he requested that the latter should present himself during the evening at the Prussian head-quarters.

<sup>1</sup> “MONSIEUR MON FRERE,—Having failed to meet death in the midst of my troops, nothing more remains for me to do but to place my sword in the hands of your Majesty.

“I am, your Majesty’s good brother,

“NAPOLEON.”

The King replied :—

“MONSIEUR MON FRERE,—Whilst regretting the circumstances under which we meet, I accept your Majesty’s sword ; and I beg of you to be good enough to nominate one of your officers furnished with full powers to treat to the capitulation of the army which has fought so bravely under your orders. On my part I have appointed General von Moltke for this purpose.

“I am, your Majesty’s good brother,

“WILLIAM.”

When General de Wimpffen arrived in the presence of General von Moltke, he pleaded warmly in favour of his troops ; but the chief of the Prussian staff replied :—“Your army at the present moment does not consist of more than 80,000 men ; we have 230,000 men who completely surround it ; all our artillery is in position, and can destroy the town in two hours ; your troops cannot come out except through the gates, and it would be impossible for them to form for a movement in advance ; you have only provisions enough for one day and are almost without ammunition. In this position the continuance of the defence would be nothing but a fruitless massacre, and the responsibility of it will rest upon those who did not prevent it.”

Count Bismarck made known to General Reille that the King of Prussia would be very glad to have an interview with the Emperor ; and it was settled that this interview should take place the next day at some spot which would be selected for the purpose.

On the morning of the 2nd of September Napoleon III., accompanied by the Prince of Moskowa, entered a droschky drawn by two horses, and drove towards the Prussian lines. General Reille preceded him on horseback in order to inform Count von Bismarck of the Emperor's arrival. As the latter reckoned upon returning to the town, he did not take leave either of the troops which surrounded it or of the battalion of grenadiers and the *cent-gardes* who formed his customary escort ; when the drawbridge of the south gate of Sedan was lowered, the zouaves who were on duty there again saluted him with the cry of “*Vive l'Empereur!*” It was the last adieu which was to meet his ears ! When he arrived within a quarter of a league of Donchéry, not wishing to proceed to the Prussian head-quarters, the Emperor stopped at a small house which stood by the road and there awaited the arrival of the Chancellor of



the Northern Confederation. The latter, having been apprised of this by General Reille, soon arrived.

The conversation first entered upon the position of the French army, ■ question of vital urgency. Count von Bismarck stated that General Moltke alone was competent to deal with this question. He afterwards inquired of the Emperor if he wished to commence negotiations for peace, and the latter replied that his present situation prevented him entering upon this subject; also, that the Regent, being in Paris and surrounded by her ministers and the Chambers, could in complete independence negotiate for the attainment of an end so desirable for all.

"But," replied the Chancellor of the Confederation, "looking at the disposition of the French, such as I know it to be, they will never pardon our successes, and peace can only be a truce."

"If the conditions proposed by Prussia," answered the Emperor, "are stamped with the generosity shown by the Emperor Alexander in 1815, the peace which will be concluded may be a durable one."

When General von Moltke arrived, Napoleon III. requested of him that nothing should be settled before the interview which was to take place, for he hoped to obtain from the King some favourable concessions for the army. M. von Moltke promised nothing; he confined himself to announcing that he was about to proceed to Vendresse, where the King of Prussia then was, and Count von Bismarck urged the Emperor to go on to the Château de Bellevue, which had been selected as the place of the interview. It became evident that the latter would be delayed until after the signature of the capitulation.

In the meantime, General de Wimpffen had called together a council of war composed of about thirty-two general officers, who, according to General de Wimpffen's



official report,<sup>1</sup> unanimously declared that it was impossible to continue the struggle, and that capitulation was a hard but absolute necessity. The commander-in-chief of the French army soon arrived at the Château de Bellevue, and being joined in a room on the ground floor by Generals von Moltke and Podbielski and by Count von Bismarck, discussed with them the clauses of the capitulation. When it was signed, General de Wimpffen came to inform the Emperor, who had remained all this time on an upper floor. A few minutes afterwards, the King of Prussia arrived on horseback, accompanied by the Crown Prince and attended by a few officers.

It was now three years since the sovereigns of France and Prussia had met, under very different circumstances. William III. having come to Paris with the Emperor of Russia during the Universal International Exhibition, Napoleon III. did the honours of the capital, then resplendent with a collection of all the manufactures of the universe, with the wonders produced by prosperity, and with the presence of all the sovereigns of Europe. Now, betrayed by fortune, Napoleon III. had lost everything, and had surrendered into the hands of the conqueror the only thing left him—his liberty!

The King of Prussia, just in the same way he wrote to the Queen, comparing in his mind the present position of the Emperor with that which he filled when he last saw him, manifested towards him a deep sympathy with his misfortunes, which, as he said, he attributed to imprudent advice. Nevertheless, he declared that it was impossible for him to grant better conditions to the army. He informed the Emperor that he had assigned to him as his residence the castle of Wilhelmshöhe, near Cassel; the Crown Prince then came

<sup>1</sup> Two generals objected, asserting that they were opposed to the capitulation.

and shook him cordially by the hand, and in a quarter of an hour the King withdrew. The Emperor was permitted to send a despatch in cypher to the Empress. This despatch informed her of the events that had taken place, and urged her to negotiate for peace.

During this interview, Count von Bismarck took aside General Castelnau, the Emperor's aide-de-camp, and told him that no credit must be given to the reports of the newspapers which made out that the King had stated that he was making war with the Emperor only. The King was of course fighting with the army and its chief also so long as he was in arms against him; but he had never expressed the intention of overthrowing a dynasty which in his opinion was the most suitable both for France and Europe.

It was decided that Napoleon III. should remain at the Château de Bellevue until he could be conveyed across Belgium into Germany.

On the 3rd of September, the Emperor, accompanied by one of the king's aides-de-camp and most of the officers of his own household, and escorted by a squadron of hussars, set out for Belgium, passing through the Prussian lines. On arriving in the evening at Bouillon, he was received there by the inhabitants with demonstrations of the most lively sympathy; on the next day he slept at Verviers.

On the morning of the 5th, whilst in the latter town, he heard of the revolution which had broken out in Paris.

Thus, the misfortunes of the campaign of 1870 were about to be increased a hundredfold. No longer was there any regular government to assemble the forces of the country, and to show to the enemy a whole people united for its defence; no longer was there any recognized government to treat for an honourable peace and invoke the support of neutral powers. France was about to be given over to an unbridled spirit of demagoguery,

which would cause torrents of blood to be shed to no purpose, and squander all the resources of the country, to issue only in a disgraceful peace!

Under the ascendancy of these sad forebodings, the Emperor, separated from his son and ignorant of the lot in store for the Empress, arrived, at five o'clock in the evening, near Cassel. The civil and military governors of the province received him at the railway station.

Napoleon III. entered a carriage and was conveyed to the Château of Wilhelmshöhe, a former residence of his uncle the King of Westphalia. He remained there until the 14th of March, the day on which he learnt that the Commune, the offspring of the 4th of September, had triumphed, and was soon to deface with fire and bloodshed the capital of France.

## REFLECTIONS.

## THE ORDERS OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

THE Emperor thus relates with admirable simplicity the story of the campaign of 1870, and the events of that drama, the last act of which overthrew his crown.

His self-abnegation was so complete that he made a rule of not interfering in anything whatever. On the one hand he had surrendered all his powers into the hands of the government of the Regency, and on the other he had shortly after resigned the chief command of the army; he was nothing more than a simple spectator, encouraging and supporting by his presence the moral energy of the army and giving to the nation an example of self sacrifice.

Thus, at Sedan, he was entirely ignorant of the arrangements and resolutions of the general-in-chief; he remained constantly under fire in the midst of the brave battalions which were struggling against the impossible, and nevertheless we have learnt since how great the physical sufferings were to which the Emperor was a victim, excruciating sufferings which nobody suspected down to the day when, two years later, at the time of the first operation, Sir Henry Thompson, the surgeon, exclaimed, on seeing the state of Napoleon III., "He must have shown an immeasurable heroism in remaining on horseback during the battle of Sedan; the agony must have been constant, and I have never known anything like it."

The last and decisive moment had come; hundreds of cannon were hurling their projectiles on to our defence-

less soldiers ; the generals hastened to him one after another, declaring that all resistance had become impossible. The Emperor knew that the hour had come, and that he must drink the bitter cup down to the very dregs. His lofty soul resigned itself to his fate ; for an instant he resumed the authority in order to put an end to a useless butchery, and take upon himself the responsibility of an act which he had not assisted in bringing about.

It was ■ sublime act of devotion, and will be an eternal honour to him who had the courage to fulfil so sad ■ duty !

Nevertheless France might still have remained great ; peace might have been concluded ; and on the 4th of September, before the fall of the Empire, we might still have saved our lost provinces, and the greatest part of our milliards.

But the canker-worm had already done its work, and the spirit of demagoguery, after brooding in obscurity over its sinister designs, now appeared in open day, and, giving a helping hand to the enemy who profaned the soil of the country, it disorganized France, and brought about that series of disasters which only terminated with the surrender of two of our provinces.

The sacrifices made by Napoleon III. served but as weapons for calumny ; insults were systematically and persistently propagated by the insurrectionists of the 4th of September ; and these insults were the means by which the new Government succeeded in helping forward its odious schemes, and misleading ■ doting nation. But the truth was not long before it came out, and caused a sentiment of reparation and justice towards Napoleon III. to spring up in the hearts of the French.

Ere long the impartiality of history, free from any criminal influence and from all ambitious speculation, will demonstrate to the world the dazzling prosperity of the Second Empire. Sebastopol, Magenta, Sol-



ferino, an enfranchised Italy—that grand idea of nationalities—the glorious campaigns of China and Indo-China, France raised to the zenith of its power—all will be remembered.

And then history will call to mind the Emperor, a victim to the most cruel sufferings, endeavouring to avoid a war that he dreaded, because he knew that years were required for effecting in the French army the reforms which for a long time he had urgently demanded, the execution of which was incessantly paralyzed by that fraction of the *corps législatif* which was always ready to vomit forth fire and flame whenever there was a question of increasing the war-budget, or of improving our artillery and our system of arms.

Nevertheless, when urged on as he was by events and by public opinion, it was no longer permissible for him to draw back, Napoleon III. had a right to count on success ; and victory would, without doubt, have been on the side of our eagles, if the effective forces which had been publicly announced had existed anywhere except on paper.

“Our effective forces in men and horses, both on a peace footing and a war footing are superior to those of Prussia.” This sentence was contained in one of the last reports sent to the Emperor a few days before the declaration of war ; the Sovereign therefore experienced, as he himself tells us, a most cruel deception, when, instead of the 400,000 men with whom he had thought to take the field, he saw that in reality he had on the frontier only a moiety of these forces..

At the present time it is easy enough to prove that, among the various causes which insured victory to the Germans, the disproportion of the forces, numerically speaking, must hold a place ; but this disproportion would not have been so great in each separate battle, if the army-corps had mutually supported one another

according to the orders which their chiefs had received from the Emperor.

In this campaign the Prussians never fought except against inferior forces; and it is very doubtful whether they would have been willing to accept battle with an equal number of men and guns.

The whole world now recognizes the fact that the French armies have not degenerated, and that during the campaign of 1870 they always merited their old reputation for bravery. The battles of Borny, Vionville, and Gravelotte, bear a striking witness to this; these three days—it is known now—were so many victories for the French; but either they did not know how, or they were not able, to profit by them.

Thus we shall again insist on this important point, viz. that if, at the very outset, the plans of the Emperor had been carried out, the dash of our soldiers and the initiative taken by the officers of the Army of the Rhine would have won an early victory over the Prussians; and this victory might have been a decisive one.

At Forbach, on the 7th of August, the 30,000 men commanded by General Frossard, in spite of the disadvantage of a surprise, might up to evening have hoped for a victory against the 70,000 men commanded by General Steinmetz. Who would dare to say that the day would not have been in our favour if General Frossard had received the reinforcement of several divisions "*which ought and could have flown to his succour*"?

At Reischofen, on the 6th of August, Marshal MacMahon had only 33,000 men to oppose to the 120,000 men commanded by the Crown Prince of Prussia; and with this heroic corps he fought the whole day against a formidable army. Is it not reasonable to think that he would have won the victory if he had been assisted by the corps of General de Failly, which had been placed at ■ short distance from the Marshal, with orders to

London Place,  
Chislehurst.

Le 15

Monsieur Monsieur de la Chapelle  
Quoy le document n'est le 1-

..... soit très

importante pour mes propres  
responsabilités; j'ai préféré le retrancher  
car cela accusera trop clairement

.....

..... L'un  
peut dire de le retrancher.  
L'autre demanderait pourquoi  
toute la partie qui est  
donnée est si importante  
pour les intérêts affectés

C. V. G. J. L.

Monsieur le Comte de la Chapelle  
Westbourne Villas,  
Harrow.

London

support him, "*and did, in fact, protect his retreat*" ? Why did not General de Failly hasten to him at the sound of the cannonade ? What were the different reasons and the various incidents which prevented the formal orders of the Sovereign from being carried out ?

It is not my duty to enter into any further details as to these sad pages of our contemporaneous history ; the Emperor has preferred to keep silence as to the faults committed, and I am bound religiously to respect the will of him who wrote ~~me~~ the letter on this point given in the Appendix.

## THE EMPEROR'S LATEST FRIENDS.

## THE SOVEREIGN STATESMAN.

IT is useless to enlarge on the fidelity of those men of sincere faith and traditional devotion who followed the imperial family into exile, and preferred sharing their bad fortunes and the bread of exile after having held a distinguished place round the Sovereign in his days of prosperity.

The names of Conneau, Daviller, Clary, Corvisart, Bassano, Piétri, Filon, and of a few others, will have an abiding place in the history of the Second Empire as symbols of loyalty and fidelity in misfortune.

Ready as they were at all times to sacrifice their lives for their august master, they surrounded him down to the last moment of his life with tender solicitude, multiplying their cares to make him forget his lost country and his absent friends, and to alleviate the bitterness of exile.

Among foreigners Napoleon III. had formed sincere friendships. The nobility and elevation of his character were duly appreciated, and he was surrounded by an unshaken devotion which showed itself every instant in all kind of forms. The royal family of England set the example; and Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales were incessantly lavishing on the Emperor every kind of attention. As regards the English people, the respect and affection they entertained for Napoleon III. were expressed in warm ovations on every occasion that he appeared in public.



It would take too much time to enumerate here the long list of those men who manifested ■ real and constant affection for the Emperor, and by redoubling their kind attentions sought every day to lessen the sorrows of the past.

I often acted as the medium in bringing to the notice of the august exile the wishes and offers of service expressed by these noble and disinterested foreigners.

Many had been guests at the Tuileries when glory and splendour surrounded the throne ; others had only known Napoleon III. in the land of his exile ; but the monarch succeeded in inspiring all with respect and affection for him, the recollection of which will afford a fresh proof of the great virtues and distinguished qualities which marked the man who had the gift of calling forth such devotion.

In the eyes of foreigners Camden Place, the modest dwelling of the dethroned monarch, was surrounded by ■ brighter halo of glory than was the Tuileries, when they fully comprehended the spirit of rectitude and abnegation of self that had dictated the last actions of the Emperor's official life.

They sympathized deeply with him in his great misfortunes and paid homage to the dignity and courage of the exile, and this sympathy was not confined to mere words. So far from being barren in results, it was evinced by the most loyal and the most generous offers. The Emperor felt them much. He was desirous of possessing the esteem of his friends, and responded to it with cordiality, showing them how much he was touched by so many proofs of devotion ; but he would never consent to avail himself of this goodwill and these generous offers by placing them in requisition for his own benefit.

The attribute that was most especially admired in England was the disinterestedness shown by Napoleon III.,

who had retrod the path of exile without giving ■ thought to that personal comfort which cannot be insured without fortune. He had returned to England ■ poor man, although he might have possessed himself of so many millions, and when the reality became well known by the English public, the high esteem in which the great sovereign was already held was increased in extraordinary proportions.

Spontaneous offers were multiplied on every side, and the Emperor would only have had to say the word in order to have at his disposal, and without any condition whatever, very considerable sums.

Among these sympathizing persons one had been especially distinguished by the Emperor, and he constantly met the monarch again in his most cruel hours of adversity. This great financier and economist has begged me not to mention his name ; he was admitted into full intimacy, and his relations with the Emperor were constant ; he was always ready to render any service, and his offers were frequently accepted, as he was one of the best and most disinterested of friends. There was a remarkable interchange of views between the great monarch and the brilliant economist ; many schemes of financial reform were conceived, and, at the very moment when the Emperor's malady rendered an operation necessary, they were elaborating together, through my intervention, a plan for the abolition of the *octroi* in France, a project which could be realized without diminishing the resources of the revenue. I was the editor of this admirable work, and was astonished at its practical simplicity.

This eminent economist likewise suggested a system of finance which would allow of our country supporting the weight of enormous debt with which it is burdened, without having recourse for this purpose to those oppressive and extraordinary taxes which are the ruin of all.

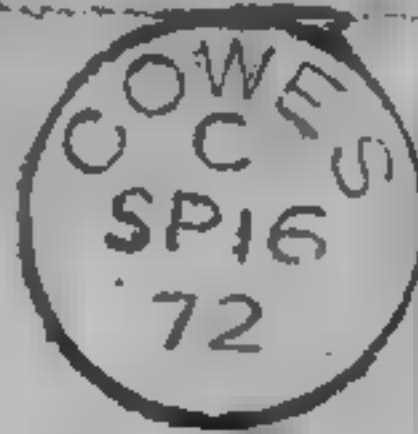
Comme le 16 Sept.

Mme cher Monsieur de La Chapelle  
Je vous envoie à Paris croyant  
que vous y étiez encore.

Il est espéré que M. de La Chapelle

Reviendra d'ici

Amicalement  
votre  
ami



M. de La Chapelle

4 Westbourne Villa

Harrow Road London

But the Emperor is dead, and his heir, the intelligent young prince, so full of promise, will recognize and mature the great ideas which occupied the minds of his august father and his devoted friends.

Among the assiduous visitors at Camden Place, princes, statesmen, diplomatists, and generals, hastening from all countries, one here and there caught a glimpse of a figure personifying that pleiad of friends who had always remained devoted to the Emperor, in evil days as well as in prosperity.

I often met a person who has good claim to flatter himself that he was one of the Emperor's most sincere friends. In 1840 the Chevalier Henri Wikoff met Prince Louis Napoleon in London, at the hospitable table of King Joseph; subsequently, he made a long journey in order to place himself at the disposal of the Prince when he was a prisoner at Ham. He visited him in his days of trial, and published an interesting account of his conversations with the prisoner. This pamphlet caused considerable sensation in 1847, both in England and also in the United States, and—a point which is worthy of remark—it contained, so to speak, the programme of the Second Empire. The Chevalier saw the Prince again at the Elysée, and afterwards (but rarely) at the Tuileries; for high fortunes had now supervened, and the philosopher who had lavished his good offices on the captive prince kept himself in the background when recompense awaited him.

After the fall of the Empire, he again hastened to proffer his consolations and his services to the prince who had met with a fresh captivity at Wilhelmshöhe and an exile at Chislehurst.

The Emperor was fond of receiving frequently the people who sympathized with him, and under the shade of the trees at Camden Place the leaders of French, English, and American society might constantly be met,

united in this pious pilgrimage. When the weather permitted, the picturesque avenues in the park belonging to the house were the spots where he received his intimate friends, and, both in these walks and in his ordinary receptions, his visitors enjoyed the charm of a conversation, in which a simple and touching courtesy and cordiality were mingled with a correctness of ideas and a high tone of mind.

It would take too much time to analyze here the various subjects entered upon in these interviews with different political personages. I will, however, cite one which has a certain interest at the present time, for it has reference to a political act which is perhaps destined to revolutionize the present system—an act the grand idea of which emanates directly from the Emperor Napoleon III., a fact probably hitherto unknown.

The point in question was the "Congress of Arbitration," a system inaugurated by England and the United States in regard to the questions relative to the "Alabama Claims" and the "Newfoundland Fisheries."

About the middle of November I was summoned to introduce to the presence of the Emperor Mr. Thornton Hunt, a political writer connected with one of the chief organs of the English press; and I cannot better show the truthfulness of what I have stated than by making public an analysis of the letter that was addressed to me by that gentleman.

"In March, 1865," wrote Mr. Thornton Hunt, "I had the honour of being received at the Tuileries by his Majesty the Emperor. When in his august presence I was struck with the calm dignity with which he welcomed me, a dignity that soon changed into affability as the conversation went on.

"When seated near Napoleon III., and directly opposite to him, I listened to him attentively and replied promptly to the questions he asked me. The subjects



touched upon were numerous, but with regard to each of them I noticed in his Majesty the thoroughly settled idea of remaining in perfect harmony with England.

"We soon entered upon a most important subject, the question as to 'periodical congresses of powers,' a system which the Emperor was the first to propose in his letter to the Queen of England, dated the 4th of November, 1863. In this letter he started the idea of creating an 'International Council,' the mission of which would be to watch over the affairs of Europe, to follow out and study the different phases through which the mutual relations between various States might pass, and to give to treaties their true interpretation.

"Some days afterwards this project was made known to M. Drouyn de l'Huys as having been advised by Lord Clarendon at one of the sittings of the Congress of Paris, when the point in question was as to calling in the intervention of a friendly state in the case of any difference supervening between the Ottoman Porte and the powers who signed the treaty.

"This happy innovation was capable of a more general application, and the Emperor called attention to the point that an International Congress would produce the best effect in the present state of Europe. Appealing to the war in America, he showed the inevitable difficulties which had arisen on the question of the rights of neutrals, which are in many respects not so well established as those of belligerents.

"An International Council, he added, might meet at certain fixed epochs, every ten years for instance, and the results obtained at these assemblies would be important and beneficial to all the powers of the world, for they may be stated as follows :—

"Firstly ; deliberations of the Congress, clearing up questions and adjusting differences, for the very reason that it would impose on the contesting parties the weight

of international opinion, and thus settle the dispute for years.

"Secondly ; even allowing that the quarrel should be renewed at the expiration of four or five years, so that a new problem for solution should supervene, nations would say 'the Congress must meet at such and such a date ; let us have patience for a little time, and the question will be brought before it.'

"Thirdly ; the minutes of this International Council would serve as bases for a code of international laws. This would be an important innovation, for, properly speaking, international laws do not exist, and we have at present no other guide than the works of learned jurisconsults, the statutes of various nations, and theory.

"Fourthly ; to these anticipated results of the International Council there will also have to be added this important fact : it would not be long before the Congress would found an international parliament, which would serve, not only for sanctioning fresh laws, but also for amending those old laws which have been rendered obsolete by the ever-increasing progress of our times.

"After having spoken to this effect, the Emperor entered into some secondary details in the carrying out of his plan, and then took leave of me with the greatest affability.

"On my return to England, I saw that my fellow-countrymen had not thoroughly understood the nature of the proposition made by the Emperor ; and Lord Palmerston himself, whom I had the opportunity of seeing on the subject, pronounced the opinion that this principle appeared to him to be inapplicable, and that besides, he foresaw too many difficulties and too much risk for it ever to be determined on.

"Several statesmen at that time shared in the ideas of Lord Palmerston, but they have since confessed to

me that they had not at first sight comprehended the nature and importance of the question, and at the present time the majority of public opinion admits the probable effects of this principle as regards the interests of nations.

“Considering that the institution proposed by Napoleon III. could not fail in producing great results for the benefit of nations, and seeing how imperfectly understood the project then was, except by a limited number of public men, I had for a long time felt a strong desire again to see him who had conceived this grand idea, and to beg him to develop it still more explicitly; and this was the reason why, thanks to your kind intervention, I was summoned to visit the Emperor at Chislehurst. You will recollect that my intention was to ask his Majesty if he would not write a work on this important subject, and thus give it a more complete form; you also know with what kindness and friendliness I was received. I was forcibly struck with the changes that had taken place in the Emperor; he had a more serious and reserved air, but he listened to me attentively, appearing to weigh every one of my words and following all the details as I gave them; at the end of this conversation I came to the conclusion that he had heard me with attention, and that he would write a book if he was able, although he seemed to doubt whether this would be possible. I thought at the time that his hesitation was caused by the position of affairs in France and the pressure of the various questions with which he was compelled to busy himself; but the catastrophe which has since so unexpectedly occurred has revealed to me an interpretation of his Majesty's words much more sad and much more real.

“Nevertheless, as I have often repeated, the day will come when the world will rejoice at the inauguration of that institution in which civilization is still wanting, I mean the ‘International Council;’ and when that time

arrives, if memory still exists among men, mankind will recognize that Napoleon III., the exile of Chislehurst, was the founder of this court of legislation and of judicial appeal for nations."

This eminent journalist was not mistaken; the Emperor had the intention of developing in a work, the materials for which he commissioned me to prepare, that admirable system which will be no doubt adopted when governments are wiser, and when they give to the interests of the peoples under them a higher place than to their own personalities. The interview of which Mr. Thornton Hunt speaks took place last November, and we were then far from thinking that the career of the illustrious statesman was so soon to come to ■ close.

Camden Place,  
Chislehurst.

Toile mullati, en semblable  
à celle employée dans les  
lamps de Davy, de 4 pieds  
carrés soit 2 p. 9. d. et 2 p. 10.



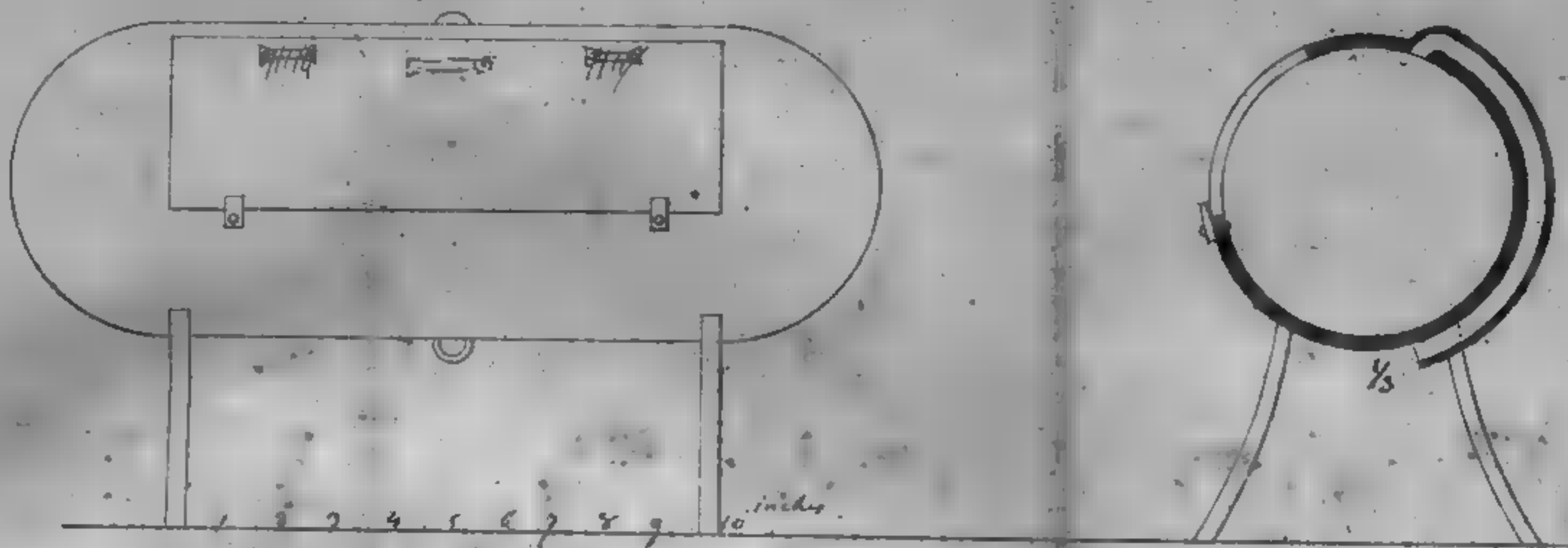
M. le Comte de La Chapelle.

4. Westbourne, villa.

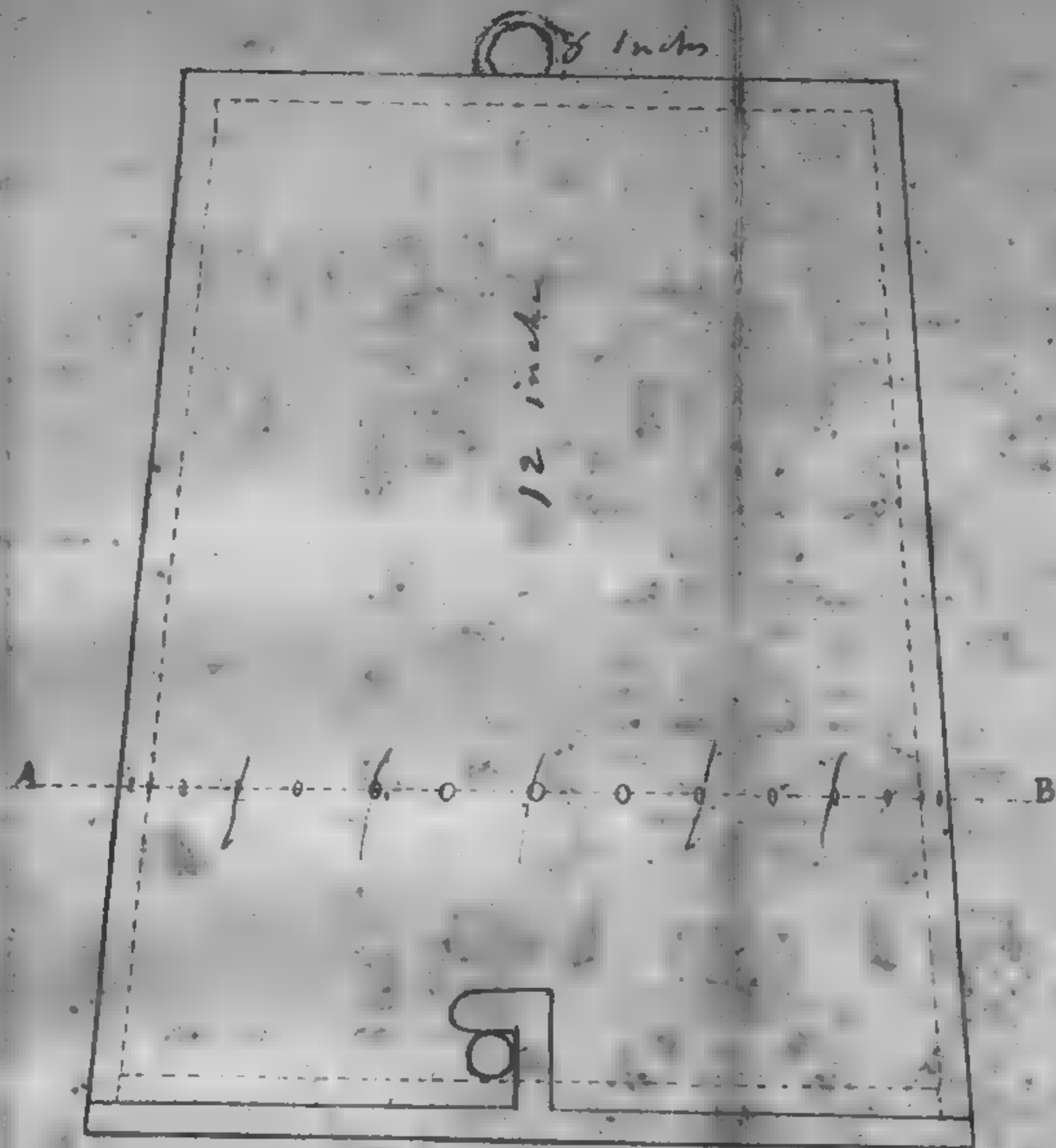
Marrow road

London





cylindre en fonte s'adaptant  
 sur les foyers des chemins  
 ordinaires. Ce cylindre est  
 muni d'un tube recouvert  
 d'une couche en passage au  
 gaz qui a développé du  
 charbon contenu dans le cylindre.  
 Le cylindre a une porte qui  
 permet de y introduire et de  
 retirer le charbon.



10 inches

for AB

○ real size of the hole

## THE EMPEROR'S SCIENTIFIC LABOURS.— THE LATTER DAYS OF HIS LIFE.

### THE PRINCE LOUIS-NAPOLEON.

AFTER passing a portion of the summer in the Isle of Wight, where he occupied his leisure time in writing ■ work on artillery, the Emperor returned to Chislehurst. His health appeared to be improved, and he resumed the general course of his labours and his scientific experiments.

The winter was approaching, and Napoleon III., who constantly devoted himself to the comfort of the working classes, called my attention with some anxiety to the continual rise in the price of fuel and to the privations to which poor people would be exposed during hard frosts.

"I have been thinking," he said to me one day, "about a heating apparatus, which, although it will considerably increase the warmth of a room, will reduce by more than half the cost of fuel. Here is a sketch of the machine; have it constructed, and we will try some experiments with it."

This apparatus, invented by the Emperor, consisted of ■ cast-iron cylinder, adaptable to the grates of ordinary fire-places; this cylinder is provided with a curved tube to give a vent to the gases which are produced by the coal contained in the cylinder; the action of the gas and the concentration of the heat of an ordinary fire-place are intended to produce the expected result.

I intrusted the model designed by the Emperor to an

English engineer. I sent him a few explanations, and this practical man was astonished at the invention and the results it was called on to produce.

The apparatus was constructed, and the experiments with it being crowned with success, a second and improved machine was designed by the Emperor and cast in a few days ; ultimately, a third apparatus, still more perfect than the two former, was in process of construction at the time when the Emperor died.

The Emperor Napoleon III. is charged with conspiring ; he might certainly have done so with the greatest chance of succeeding ; millions were offered him, and the influence of some of the most powerful men in Europe would not have been wanting ; but the monarch who was still the legitimate sovereign of the French people was unwilling to avail himself of any political surprise in order to regain the throne ; he did not desire to resume power except through the main avenue to it—an appeal to the people.

"You tell me that it is time I should present myself," he wrote to the Judge Bernier ; "but I cannot present myself except through the great entrance-way of universal suffrage, and it is hardly probable that this will be appealed to.

"I regret to see in the government so little energy and spirit of foresight ; let us, however, hope for a happier future."

The Emperor worked incessantly in the solution of the high political questions with which Europe was busied, and in his leisure hours he devoted himself to science, in which his natural philanthropy generally directed his labours towards projects the aim of which was the welfare of his country. In this way it was that the Emperor conspired when in exile.

It does not behove me to disclose the thoughts which the Emperor was good enough to communicate to me as

to men and things, and the judgments which he had formed as to eminent personages who had played an important part—sometimes the leading part—during the long period which commenced with his elevation to the presidency by six millions of votes, and ended at Camden Place, in the land of his exile.

He was acquainted with them all, and did justice to their high qualities ; but he did not delude himself in respect to their defects or the weak side of any particular person. Although he felt deeply any defection from him, he kept silence as every fresh blow in this way was dealt him, but the profound sadness and inward grief which possessed him might easily be remarked ; then, waking up as if from a bad dream, he took pleasure in enumerating the long list of his faithful friends, and in admiring their attitude and their efforts in the face of the persecution that surrounded them.

He often spoke of his son, and his mind was always full of him ; he himself took the direction of the superior faculties which distinguished the young prince, and he liked to hear any one repeat the observations which the prince had made on any subject.

For several weeks I had the honour of travelling to London with the Prince Imperial, who went, in company with M. Filon, his tutor, and his schoolfellow, the son of Doctor Conneau, to King's College, where he was attending a course of lectures ; I then had the advantage of talking freely with the prince, and admired the rectitude of his mind, the superior intelligence with which he estimated facts, and the logical accuracy of his arguments.

The next day I used to communicate to the Emperor anything that had struck me, and the admirable reflections that I had stored up ; the face of the father was then lighted up with a touching joy, and an ineffable smile was impressed upon his countenance.

At the present time Prince Louis Napoleon is quite ■



man; his tall and slender shape, his noble and intelligent head, and his bold and yet easy gait, render him in physical qualities an elegant cavalier, whilst in a mental point of view there is nothing left to desire in him.

He possesses the decision, energy, and firm will with which the Emperor was endowed; like his father, he knows how to make himself beloved by those who approach him; like him, too, he has faith and belief in all that is great and just.

Misfortunes and the trials of exile have exercised a powerful influence in developing in the prince a precocious maturity; study and meditation in adversity have caused him to acquire a spirit of analysis and reflection very much above his age.

Whatever may be the lot reserved in the future for the Prince Imperial he will not be found wanting; for he has in him the germs of those brilliant qualities which lead on to high destinies; his ardent love for his country and its people, his liberal ideas, his active and impartial mind, and his practical education, truly render him a worthy chief of the principle he represents by his birth, the principle of the "modern monarchy" based on universal suffrage, an hereditary monarchy so long as the people do not otherwise decree.

The Emperor was proud of his son, and was pleased whenever he acquired fresh proofs of the numerous good qualities that distinguish the prince; the presence of the latter near him was certainly the most efficacious balm for the cruel injuries from which he was suffering, and his greatest consolation was to see revived in his son and heir the ideas and great thoughts which had exercised the most powerful influence on his own life.

Time rolled on, and the couriers from France brought news, the gravity of which gave much scope for reflection. The stormy scenes in the Chambers on the return of the deputies seemed to occupy intensely the Emperor's

mind ; he noticed with grief the progress of demagogy and the want of union in the conservative party ; the theme he loved best was conciliation, and he entreated his friends to think of but one thing only : the liberation of French territory and the general interests of the country.

At one time he appeared to hope that the constitutional régime, the bases of which had been adopted, would avert the difficulties of the crisis ; thus he looked upon the resignation of M. Thiers as a misfortune under the circumstances in which France then stood.

"In fact," said he, "whilst a change in the ministry might give a chance of arranging matters, the resignation of M. Thiers would bring confusion into the Assembly, and then what would become of France ? In all probability she would become a prey to the Radical party.

"The 'Right' thinks that it is strong enough to oppose a solid barrier against the encroachments of democracy, and the name of Marshal MacMahon is a symbol of order. But have we not too often seen what the revolutionary party can do in the way of disorder and the advantage that, in spite of the army and the efforts of all honest men, it can derive from the first moment of stupefaction ? If, therefore, M. Thiers continues to retain his attributes as Chief of the State, and if he avoids a collision with the Assembly, he may, in accord with the latter, work successfully in the reorganization of France, and prepare the country for the choice of a definitive government by means of universal suffrage.

Some days later the Emperor was actively occupied in considering the complications which supervened in consequence of the vote of the majority of the Chamber against M. Thiers ; he blamed the tendency of the President to seek support from the Radical party, and he looked upon the future as full of threatening storms.

In the midst of these anxieties, and the daily events

brought about by the provisional state in which France then was, the Emperor more than ever comprehended the task that still remained for him to fulfil; he was not ignorant that the majority of the French sincerely desired his return; whilst the whole of Europe, which had never ceased to treat him as the only legitimate sovereign of France, had its eyes turned upon him.

He knew that the Conservative party, the "men of order," concentrated all their hopes on him, and that, as the reaction in his favour was making progress, the day would arrive when he would be summoned to resume his rights. Did the Emperor personally desire it? I do not think so; but Napoleon III. did not forget the duties he owed to his country, and he was ready to fulfil any mission to which Providence might still destine him.

His disease made rapid progress, and his sufferings had become intolerable, so that, looking at the duties which the future might impose upon him, the Emperor no longer hesitated to undergo an operation which was a subject of apprehension to him, and had, alas! been delayed too long.

## SURSUM CORDA !

ON the 24th of December Sir Henry Thompson, Sir William Gull, and Sir James Paget, held a long consultation with the Emperor's usual medical attendants, and it was unanimously decided that the process of lithotrity had become indispensable. The Emperor gave his consent to it, and the first operation was fixed to take place on the 4th of January, 1873.

It was, in fact, performed on that day, at half-past three o'clock. With the aid of chloroform the crushing of the stone ~~was~~ commenced, and the immediate results were as favourable as could be desired.

On the next day the patient was without fever, and could even eat some dinner ; joy was diffused over the countenances of all his faithful servants ; everything appeared to be going on as well as possible, and the greatest danger seemed to be past.

On the 6th of January, about ten o'clock, the surgeons were preparing to perform a second operation ; but some slight incident caused it to be delayed for a few hours. I was present that day at Camden Place ; and whilst the surgeons were with the Emperor, and the Empress was waiting with anguish for the result, and whilst the officers of the household were attending to their various occupations, I found myself alone in one of the drawing-rooms, and a feeling of profound sadness took possession of me.

There are people who do not put any faith in the mysterious voice of presentiment which seems to come to us from above to apprise us of the moment of danger,

of danger affecting either ourselves or those who are dear to us. For my part scepticism in this respect has long since vanished. Certain vague signs nearly always indicate to me the approach of danger or misfortune.

I therefore entertained a secret terror when I found my mind wandering away into apprehensions with which I vainly endeavoured to struggle; it seemed to me as if I was present at the Emperor's last agony; that his calm and serene countenance expressed the regret he felt at quitting life before he had fulfilled his mission; that he called for his son; and then—that he breathed his last sigh! Prostrated beneath the weight of this hallucination I threw myself into an armchair, and I was only recalled to myself by hearing the voice of Count Clary, who came to entrust me with a mission.

I left for London; but the much-loved countenance of the Emperor could not be effaced from my memory, and the certainty that some misfortune was approaching incessantly beset me.

Tuesday and Wednesday passed without any fresh incident; nevertheless, the state of the Emperor was considered more serious, and the medical men watched him in turn, without however apprehending any immediate danger.

The night between Wednesday and Thursday had been a good one, and Sir Henry Thompson, Sir William Gull, Baron Corvisart, and Doctor Conneau were to meet at eleven o'clock, before the third operation.

At ten o'clock Baron Corvisart was with the patient; he noticed a feebleness in the pulse and certain symptoms which could not escape the eye of the eminent surgeon. He therefore summoned Doctor Conneau and Sir Henry Thompson, who hastened to the room, and recognized in ■ instant that the Emperor had but ■ few minutes to live—that the end was approaching.

The Empress was immediately sent for.



Her Majesty rushed into the room of the august patient just at the moment when the pulse was getting still weaker ; already it had almost ceased to beat ; she came close to him whom she had loved so well, and uttered a few words while giving him a kiss ; the Emperor opened his eyes, an ineffable smile beamed for an instant on his face, and his lips murmured a few words : it was no doubt the last adieu. The life of Napoleon III. peacefully ebbed away. It was a quarter to eleven o'clock.

The Abbé Goddard had administered the last sacraments, and by a spontaneous movement the witnesses of this heartrending scene fell upon their knees whilst the great soul of him who was Napoleon III. was quitting its earthly tenement.

A supreme cry of grief was heard. The Empress, her strength being exhausted, and no longer able to restrain her despair, fell fainting ; but soon her moral force resuming its supremacy over nature, her Majesty came to herself, and, prostrating herself afresh, bathed with her tears the much-loved remains of him whom death had just now so unexpectedly snatched from her.

At the first news of danger, Count Clary went to Woolwich to fetch the Prince Imperial ; but two hours had elapsed, and the Prince did not arrive till after the death of his father. He was received at the door of the vestibule of Camden Place by Count Daviller ; but he was still ignorant of the misfortune which had just befallen him. The Count announced to him that the Emperor was in the utmost danger. Painfully agitated, he rushed along the passages, and, after falling down and rising again, ran to the apartments of his father, calling out to those that followed him, "After all, if a misfortune has happened, why not tell me of it ? I have courage enough to bear anything." Saying these words, he reached the threshold of the chamber of death. There

he met the Empress. The mother threw herself into the arms of her son, saying, "I have nothing left but you, Louis!" The Prince was pierced to the heart by the dread reality. He rushed into the room, and, throwing himself upon the foot of the bed, pronounced, in a loud voice, and without shedding a tear, a short and touching prayer; then he embraced the Emperor. His calmness and restrained grief were terrible; but it was too much for him, and he was led away from the mournful spectacle. When he heard the account of the last moments of his illustrious father he burst into tears.

I arrived at Camden Place two hours after the Emperor's death. Every one was in the utmost distress; Count Daviller sobbed in his endeavours to speak; Count Clary, painfully affected, was weeping bitterly; and Doctor Conneau was unable to restrain the tears which flowed in spite of all his efforts.

The Duke de Bassano was endeavouring to regain his calmness in order to reply to Lord Sydney, the Lord Chamberlain to the Queen, who had just placed his services at the disposal of the Empress. I remarked the Prince, and the sight of him pained me, so deep was his grief. He ran up to me, and, taking me by the hands, said to me, "Thank you for having come; you, who have yourself been so unfortunate, can understand my suffering; in such painful moments as these it is pleasant to see your friends around you;" and a fresh flow of tears put a stop to his utterance. I could not reply; my sorrow was beyond expression. I was painfully astounded at the death of the Emperor, and I already measured in my own mind the full extent of the catastrophe that had just befallen France and the young and sympathetic heir of this great dynasty.

A short time afterwards I was admitted into the chamber of death. It seemed to me as if the Emperor

was in a tranquil sleep ; his features had not as yet assumed the rigidity of death.

I uplifted my soul to God, and, after a short prayer, I imprinted a long and respectful kiss on the forehead of him who, when in exile, had honoured me with his friendship, whose memory will never be effaced from my recollection. It was my last adieu.

Whilst the telegraphic wires were announcing to the world the death of Napoleon III., England presented a startling spectacle ; in London the shops were closed and the counting-houses were deserted ; persons who were not acquainted accosted one another in the streets to exchange a few words of regret on the loss which Europe had just suffered.

Everywhere there were sorrow, public mourning, and the evidences that some great calamity had happened ; then the most sceptical were quieted ; and in all directions might be heard the decisive expression, "Napoleon III. was really the greatest and the most illustrious sovereign of his time."

The foreign press, forgetting all the current questions and political controversies of the day, was for some days solely occupied with this great event ; and, among the writers of the press, those very men who had most warmly attacked the policy of the Emperor, were the very first to do justice to his memory. Among many others, we will quote *verbatim* the expressions employed by *The Times*, the journal which opposed Napoleon III. *à outrance*, both when he was in exile and when he was on the throne.

"Yet, not merely because the man is gone," said *The Times*, "nor yet because he descends to his grave having recently suffered vast calamities and deep humiliations, but because it is truth and must be spoken, we bring a willing tribute to his virtues.

"Napoleon III. had the qualities which win personal

affection, respect, and admiration. He had genuine love and friendship ; he was loyal to his friends, true to all who worked with him, had his full share of personal courage, and was most grateful to all who had ever done him even a small service. It is not too much to say that he had the kindest recollection of everybody who had shown him even a passing civility in the course of his varied fortunes.

“ He had ■ true love for his country, even though he could not but identify her fortunes with his own. All his schemes for her domestic improvement, for the emancipation of her trade and industry, and the extension of commerce by new and unheard-of channels, were magnificent.

“ Received on these shores with the sympathy due to misfortune, and followed everywhere with the respect due to a dignified bearing and an affectionate nature, the Emperor acquires a new claim to consideration in the agonies of his death-bed, the manly patience with which they have been borne, and the deep affliction of those he leaves behind him.”

THE END.

Camden Place.  
Chislehurst.

Le 22 Mars.

Mon cher Monsieur de Luchingen

J'ai reçu avec un grand plaisir

.....

..... I have

received your letter by the

post of the 10th and am very

glad to hear of your recovery

.....

.....

.....

Very respectfully  
Yours

.....



h. 14. Sept

Mon cher Monsieur de la Chapelle  
J'ai reçu votre lettre du 11.  
M. R. me sera à Paris, je ne  
saurais 15 Sept.  
croyez-moi très respectueusement

Very Obedtly  
Monsieur de la Chapelle  
~~Edmond de la Chapelle~~  
No 4 Westbourne Villas  
Harrow Road  
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## AVANT-PROPOS.

Pour apprécier avec impartialité les causes des désastres qui ont accablé la France, il faut étudier avec soin les différentes phases qu'a traversées notre organisation militaire. A cet effet, il est important de publier tous les documents officiels qui peuvent éclairer l'opinion publique. Nous donnons aujourd'hui ceux que nous avons pu nous procurer ; ils ont un véritable intérêt historique. En exposant l'état réel des forces militaires pour 1870, et les efforts tentés pour les augmenter ; en faisant connaître les nombreuses ressources que possédait la France ; en rappelant les illusions qu'entretenaient les hommes les plus compétents sur la promptitude avec laquelle on pouvait passer du pied de paix au pied de guerre, on se convaincra que ce qui a manqué surtout, ce ne sont ni les hommes, ni les chevaux, ni le matériel, ni les approvisionnements, mais une organisation qui eût permis de rassembler tous ces éléments en temps opportun sur les lieux où ils devaient être employés.

Sans méconnaître les fautes qui ont pu être commises, la principale raison de nos revers est que le 6 août, lorsque les troupes allemandes attaquèrent à Froeschwiller et à Spicheren, l'armée française n'était pas prête ; car ni ses effectifs, ni ses approvisionnements n'étaient encore au complet. Cette considération est de la plus haute importance au moment où va se discuter une nouvelle organisation de l'armée.

C<sup>te</sup> DE LA CHAPELLE.

Londres, mai 1872.

*qu'a traversées*

*Il nous faut un  
régiment de cavalerie  
pour nous servir  
dans les combats  
de cavalerie*

*Il nous faut un  
régiment de cavalerie  
pour nous servir  
dans les combats  
de cavalerie*

*en outre*

*notamment*

*qui ont accablé  
la France*

*proposant*

*faisant connaître*

*sur les lieux*

*on se demandait  
si les combats  
de cavalerie*

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